



C2,346
1

MEMORANDUM

TO: Dave Sullivan, Chair
Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Jacob Browning, Planning & Development Review Department, 974-7657

DATE: May 11, 2010

RE: North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Plan
Case Nos. NP-2010-0026, C14-2010-0048 and C14-2010-0049

Description of Backup Information

Attached you will find back-up information for the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Plan (NLCNPA). This information includes:

- The North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Plan
- List of public meetings conducted during the NLCNPA planning process
- Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department's Affordability Impact Statement (forthcoming)
- Future Land Use Map
- Back-up for Case # C14-2010-0048, the North Lamar Neighborhood Plan Combining District Rezoning
- Back-up for Case # C14-2010-0049, the Georgian Acres Neighborhood Plan Combining District Rezoning

NLCNPA Planning Process

The North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Plan was initiated by Council resolution (#20061214-014) in December 2006. The first planning workshop was held on November 15, 2007. Since that workshop, Planning and Development Review Department (PDRD) staff worked with community members to conduct approximately 28 public meetings. These meetings addressed planning issue areas such as: quality of life (including crime and code enforcement issues), parks and trees, transportation, infrastructure, and land use and zoning along major corridors in the planning area. Notes from all meetings were posted on the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area's (NLCNPA) website, and the information gathered from these meetings became the foundation for the recommendations in the NLCNPA plan. Throughout the land use and zoning workshops,

C2,3,6
2

PDRD staff worked with stakeholders to formulate the zoning recommendations for specific sites in the NLCNPA. At the March 6, 2010, Final Open House, staff presented the final draft of the neighborhood plan, a draft Future Land Use Map (FLUM), and the zoning recommendations that had been formulated as part of the two and one-half year planning process in the NLCNPA. Below is a timeline of important dates in the planning process:

- **November 15, 2007:** Kick-off Meeting
- **December 2007 to December 2008:** Topic Meetings (e.g., transportation, parks, quality of life issues, etc.)
- **January 24, 2009:** Mid-Process Open House
 - Presentation of draft plan chapters
- **February 2009 to February 2010:** Land Use and Zoning Workshops
- **March 6, 2010:** Final Open House
 - Presentation of final draft plan, FLUM, and zoning recommendations

Plan Summary

Quality of Life

Much of the Quality of Life chapter addresses issues that affect the daily lives of those living in, working in, or visiting the NLCNPA. Crime and code enforcement issues were of the utmost concern to area stakeholders throughout the planning process and many of the plan's recommendations address these problem areas. Other topics covered by this chapter include: maintaining affordability, acknowledging the area's cultural diversity, improving community health, and encouraging a sustainable lifestyle. All of the recommendations found within this chapter are meant to improve the quality of life within the NLCNPA.

Parks and Trees

The Parks and Trees chapter includes recommendations for improving existing park facilities (Barrington Park and Brownie Playground) within the NLCNPA. The chapter also includes recommendations regarding parkland acquisition and those amenities stakeholders would like to see in future parks located within the NLCNPA.

The chapter also provides recommendations for the enhancement of the area's tree canopy, one of the first neighborhood plans to do so. Recommendations also include the preservation and maintenance of the area's current tree canopy.

Transportation

The Transportation chapter provides recommendations for both the pedestrian and vehicular transportation networks of the NLCNPA. Recommendations include the improvement and expansion of the pedestrian transportation systems (i.e., sidewalk and bike lane infrastructure); the provision of safety measures to protect both pedestrians and motorists; and, the expansion of public transit options within the planning area.

C2,3,6
3

Infrastructure

Much of the Infrastructure chapter focuses upon the provision of curb and gutter infrastructure in particular portions of the NLCNPA that currently do not have the means to effectively control flooding problems. Also included are recommendations for providing safety improvements in the area, including safety call boxes and streetlighting.

Land Use

Many of the NLCNPA plan's recommendations relate to land use changes in the area. As the Future Land Use Map and zoning tract maps (included in the backup), many of the land use and zoning changes occur at the periphery of the planning area, along or near its major corridors (North Lamar Boulevard, I-35, Rundberg Lane, US Highway 183, and Braker Lane). As part of the Land Use chapter, stakeholders want to: preserve the area's residential character; provide a variety of housing options on vacant or undeveloped land; create a neighborhood mixed use corridor along Ferguson Drive; retain the commercial character of I-35; preserve the commercial and industrial character of the northern portion of the planning area; create a mixed use district near the intersection of I-35 and US Highway 183; and, to make North Lamar Boulevard a mixed use corridor.

Survey Results

The Planning & Development Review Department made available a survey to planning area residents and property owners at the end of the planning process. The survey intends to assess stakeholders' satisfaction with the plan and their agreement with its recommendations. Below are the results of responses to the question, "Please rate your level of support for the NLCNPA Neighborhood Plan" (out of 24 total responses):

Response	Response Count	Response Percentage
Fully Supportive / Yo lo apoyo completamente	11	45.8%
Generally Supportive / Yo lo apoyo en general	8	33.3%
Generally Unsupportive / Yo no lo apoyo en general	1	4.2%
No support / No tengo apoyo	1	4.2%
Unfamiliar with the Plan / No soy familiar con el plan	3	12.5%

Public Meetings Conducted in the NLCNPA

C2,3,6
4

Meeting Name	Date	Attendance	Summary
Initial Workshops			
Kick-Off	Nov. 15, 2007	50	Introduction to the planning process; prioritization of issues affecting NLCNPA
First Workshop	Dec. 6, 2007	17	Presentation of initial survey results; SWOT analysis of NLCNPA
Goals and Visioning Workshop	Jan. 24, 2008	27	Creation of goals for each general topic
Topical Meetings			
Crime & Public Safety	Mar. 12, 2008	27	Discussion of crime statistics
Crime & Code Enforcement	Apr. 2, 2008	27	Discussion of ongoing programs used by APD and SWS to combat crime and code problems
Code Enforcement	Apr. 23, 2008	37	Identification of areas with code violations in the NLCNPA
Pedestrian Transit	Jun. 3, 2008	11	Discussion of sidewalks, bike lanes, and pedestrian safety; received recommendations for sidewalk/bike lane additions
Transportation	Jun. 24, 2008	9	Overview of transportation issues and projects for the NLCNPA; discussion of dangerous driving conditions
Health in the NLCNPA	Jul. 8, 2008	14	Discussion of the relationship between healthy food options, lifestyles, and chronic illness in the NLCNPA
North Lamar Boulevard Corridor I	Jul. 29, 2008	15	Presentation of North Lamar Corridor Survey results; visual preference survey for the corridor
North Lamar Boulevard Corridor II	Aug. 19, 2008	14	Discussion of pedestrian safety along North Lamar and CapMetro Bus Rapid Transit
Parks and Trees	Oct. 16, 2008	9	Discussion of current and future park facilities; presentation of Austin Community Trees and Urban Forest programs
Infrastructure	Nov. 18, 2008	9	Overview of curb and gutter construction, areas of flooding; identification of areas needing infrastructure improvements
Sustainability	Dec. 9, 2008	12	Presentation of various programs that promote sustainability and community gardening

C2, 3, 6
5

Meeting Name	Date	Attendance	Summary
Mid-Process			
Mid-Process Open House	Jan. 24, 2009	34	Review draft chapters of the NLCNPA neighborhood plan
Land Use and Zoning Workshops			
Land Use I	Feb. 3, 2009	14	Exercise to determine areas of possible change throughout the NLCNPA
Land Use II	Mar. 3, 2009	13	Discussion of "areas of change" along North Lamar Blvd. and Rundberg Lane
Land Use III	Mar. 31, 2009	14	Completion of "Areas of Change" exercise
Land Use IV	Apr. 27, 2009	9	Land use education; presentation of draft FLUM(s)
Land Use V	May 18, 2009	8	Conclude FLUM discussion; Finalize future land use map
Zoning I	Jun. 24, 2009	15	Introduction to Zoning; Conditional overlay discussion
Zoning II	Jul. 29, 2009	17	Contact Team information; discussion of front yard parking and mobile food vending restrictions
Zoning III	Aug. 17, 2009	15	Conversation on Infill Options and Design Tools
Zoning IV	Sep. 14, 2009	10	Presentation of zoning recommendations
Zoning V	Oct. 6, 2009	15	Finalization of zoning recommendations; vision statement creation
Final Workshop	Nov. 2, 2009	18	Wrap-up discussions on residential design guidelines and infill tools, front yard parking, and finalization of FLUM and zoning rec's.
Rezoning Notification Meeting	Feb. 24, 2010	26	Discussion of the rezonings made during the planning process.
Final Open House			
Final Open House	Mar. 6, 2010	27	Review the NLCNPA plan and zoning recommendations
Implementation			
Planning Commission	Spring 2010	---	
City Council	Spring 2010	---	

C21316
6



DRAFT

The North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area

Neighborhood Plan

An Amendment to the
Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan

Spring 2010

*Note: This is the **DRAFT** neighborhood plan, and the content herein may not reflect that of the final version.*



C2,3,6
7

CITY COUNCIL

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PLANNING and DEVELOPMENT REVIEW DEPARTMENT

Greg Guernsey, Director

C2,3,6
8

By adopting the plan, the City Council demonstrates the City's commitment to the implementation of the plan. However, approval of the plan does not legally obligate the City to implement any particular action item, nor does adoption of the plan begin the implementation of any item. The implementation of every recommendation will require separate and specific actions by the neighborhood, the City, and by other agencies.

The Neighborhood Plan will be supported and implemented by:

- City Boards, Commissions, and Staff
- City departmental budgets
- Capital Improvement Projects
- Other agencies and organizations
- Direct neighborhood action

C2,3,6
9

NEIGHBORHOOD ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Planning and Development Review Department staff would like to acknowledge the following institutions that supported neighborhood planning efforts by providing meeting space throughout the process:

Barrington Elementary School
Gus Garcia Recreation Center
Little Walnut Creek Branch of the Austin Public Library
Saint Mark United Methodist Church

The following residents of the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area devoted significant time and effort during the planning process:

Sylvia Araiza	Ev Lunning
Robert Atkinson	Sherry Miller
Richard Burrus	Mona Noll
Lyn Galbreth	Andres Orona, Jr.
Gloria Garcia	Dina and Mario Ortiz
Lisa Garner	Laura Rheams
Ray Garner	Vicky Scofield
Pastor Karl Gronberg	Wayne and Sandy Tobias
Lisa Hinely	Deloise Vasquez
Manoocher Kavoussi	Gene and Marzella Zumalt



Participants at the November 2007 Kick-Off Event

CITY STAFF and OTHER ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

C2, 3, 6
10

Lead Planning and Development Review Department staff members for this plan were:

Mark Walters, Principal Planner
Jacob Browning, Neighborhood Planner
Greg Dutton, Neighborhood Planner

Other City of Austin staff members who lent their guidance and support to this plan were:

Michael Abramov, Austin Public Library
Surbhi Bakshi, Planning and Development Review Department
Sheila Balog, Human Resources Department
Nadia Barrera, Public Works Department
Sharon Bauer, Austin Police Department
Minal Bhakta, Planning and Development Review Department
Dipti Borkar-Desai, Austin Transportation Department
Victoria Craig, Planning and Development Review Department
Jean Drew, Watershed Protection Department
Eric Dusza, Public Works Department
Michael Embesi, Planning and Development Review Department
Kathleen Fox, Planning and Development Review Department
Paul Frank, Planning and Development Review Department
Joe Guerrero, Austin Energy
Keith Harvill, Austin Energy
Carol Haywood, Planning and Development Review Department
Matt Hollon, Watershed Protection Department
Terry Knapp, Austin Police Department
Melissa Laursen, Planning and Development Review Department
Peter Marsh, Austin Transportation Department
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Dee Dee Quinnelly, Planning and Development Review Department
Laura Patlove, Planning and Development Review Department
Steve Ramirez, Solid Waste Services
Ryan Robinson, Planning and Development Review Department
Stephanie Sears, Austin Energy
Sherri Sirwaitis, Planning and Development Review Department
Margaret Valenti, Planning and Development Review Department
Kay Vargas, Austin Police Department
Chris Yanez, Parks and Recreation Department
Michael Youngs, Austin Police Department

Representatives of outside organizations who lent their assistance to this plan were:

Sari Albornoz, Sustainable Food Center
Erica Estetter, Austin Asian American Chamber of Commerce
Russell Henk, Texas Transportation Institute
Meredith Highsmith, Capital Metro
Paula Hui, Austin Asian American Chamber of Commerce
Emily Neiman, Sustainable Food Center

TABLE of CONTENTS

C2,3,6
11

Introduction

Plan Summary	1
A Community Vision: A Future History of the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood	
Planning Area	5
Neighborhood Plan Goals	7
Priority Action Items	8

The Neighborhood in Context

Lay of the Land	12
Neighborhood History and Background	13
Statistical Profile	19
Planning Process	23

Quality of Life

Crime and Public Safety	26
Code Enforcement	28
Affordable Housing	32
Cultural Diversity	33
Community Health	34
Sustainability	36

Parks and Trees

Parks	38
Trees	45

Transportation

Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Network	52
Safety	57
North Lamar Boulevard	59
Barriers to Travel	63
Transit Options	66

Infrastructure

Curbs and Gutters	67
Infrastructure to Promote Safety	70

Land Use

Residential Character	72
North Lamar Boulevard	76
Rundberg Lane	79
Ferguson Drive	82
I-35 Corridor	83
Braker Lane and Vicinity	84
US Highway 183 and Vicinity	85

TABLE of CONTENTS

C2,3,6
12

Conclusion	86
Appendices	87

LIST of MAPS

City of Austin Neighborhood Planning Areas	3
North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area Boundaries	4
Criminal Activity Hotspots, 2004 - 2008	16
Area Parks	39
Area Parks and City of Austin-Owned Land	42
Tree Canopy, 2006	46
Tree Planting and Preservation Recommendations	49
Sidewalk Recommendations	53
Area Bicycle Routes	56
Total Motor Vehicle Collisions with Pedestrians, 2003 - 2008	60
Proposed Street Parking Limitations	64
Future Land Use Map	73
Special Use Infill Tracts	81

INTRODUCTION

C2,3,6
13

Plan Summary

This plan document is the culmination of a collaborative effort between North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area (NLCNPA) residents, property- and business-owners, and neighborhood representatives and the City of Austin's Planning and Development Review Department. The vision, goals, objectives, and recommendations found herein are meant to be stepping stones to an improved community and shall be implemented as such.

The NLCNPA plan was created in accordance with the City of Austin's Neighborhood Planning Program. The sections below provide a history of this program both throughout the City and within the NLCNPA.

Neighborhood Planning in the City of Austin

Adopted in 1979, the Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan provided the foundation for neighborhood planning throughout the City. In order to guide the City's development and growth within its existing neighborhoods, that plan stated the need to "[d]evelop and implement specific, detailed plans tailored to the needs of each neighborhood" (Policy 511.1). Once adopted, the NLCNPA neighborhood plan will become an amendment to the Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan.

In the mid-1990s, the Citizen's Planning Advisory Committee urged the City Council to consider a planning program to identify and address community needs and those issues related to development within the City's core neighborhoods. In 1997, City Council approved and adopted the neighborhood planning program to meet the broad initiatives set forth in the Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan.

Neighborhood Planning in the NLCNPA

In late 2006, City Council directed Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department¹ staff to begin the planning process in several neighborhoods, including those that make up the NLCNPA: Georgian Acres and North Lamar. Because the NLCNPA lies within an area of the City's urban core² that has largely been unplanned, the City Council thought it appropriate to initiate neighborhood planning here in 2006. Other defining factors and features that led to the creation of the NLCNPA neighborhood plan include:

- The amount of developable and vacant land within the area
- The presence of major arterial roadways, including North Lamar Boulevard, where much of the future development will be focused
- Development pressures
- The prevalence of crime and code enforcement violations

¹ In October 2009, the Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department became the Planning and Development Review Department and will be referred to as such throughout the plan.

² The *urban core* was originally designated by the City Council as a priority planning area; it is also that dense portion of the City of Austin where development is to be guided through policies such as the neighborhood plans or other various tools.

C2,3,6
14

- The current mix of commercial and residential zoning

The content of this plan, including its goals, objectives, and recommendations, was formed through a public planning process in which area stakeholders³ took part in numerous meetings, workshops, surveys, and public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council.

Throughout the planning process, Planning and Development Review staff coordinated planning activities with other City of Austin departments and outside agencies or organizations to solicit their input regarding the plan's content. Representatives from these groups offered useful insight as to how they can help fulfill the goals, objectives, and recommendations found in the NLCNPA plan. The following departments and organizations participated in the planning process for the NLCNPA:

- Austin Police Department
- Health and Human Services Department
- Parks and Recreation Department
- Public Works Department
- Solid Waste Services, Code Enforcement Division
- Transportation Department
- Capital Metro Transportation Authority
- Texas Transportation Institute

A more detailed explanation of the planning process can be found in the next chapter.

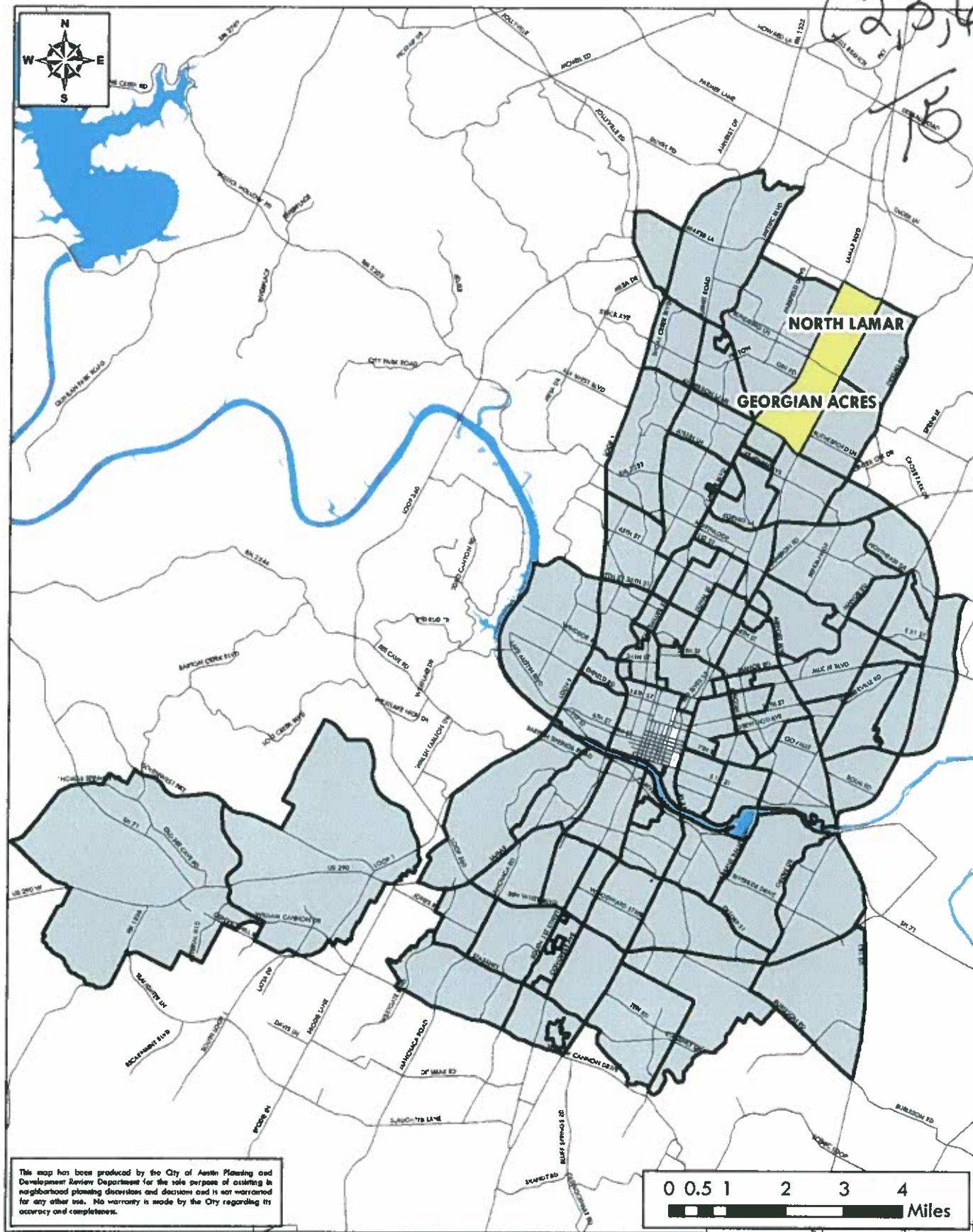
Chapter Structure and Content

The NLCNPA plan should be thought of as a “workbook,” providing stakeholders with the framework to address those issues affecting their neighborhood. NLCNPA history, statistics, and other background information are offered in the plan's introductory chapters. Topic chapters, however, form the core of the plan. These topic chapters address the five main areas of focus identified by stakeholders at the beginning of the planning process: quality of life (including crime and code enforcement), parks and trees, transportation, infrastructure, and land use.

Each chapter opens with an overall goal for that chapter's specific topic. Objectives and recommendations follow that will help satisfy each of the plan's goals and overall vision for the neighborhood. Throughout the plan document, shaded boxes are used to offer additional resources or information to help address specific issues.

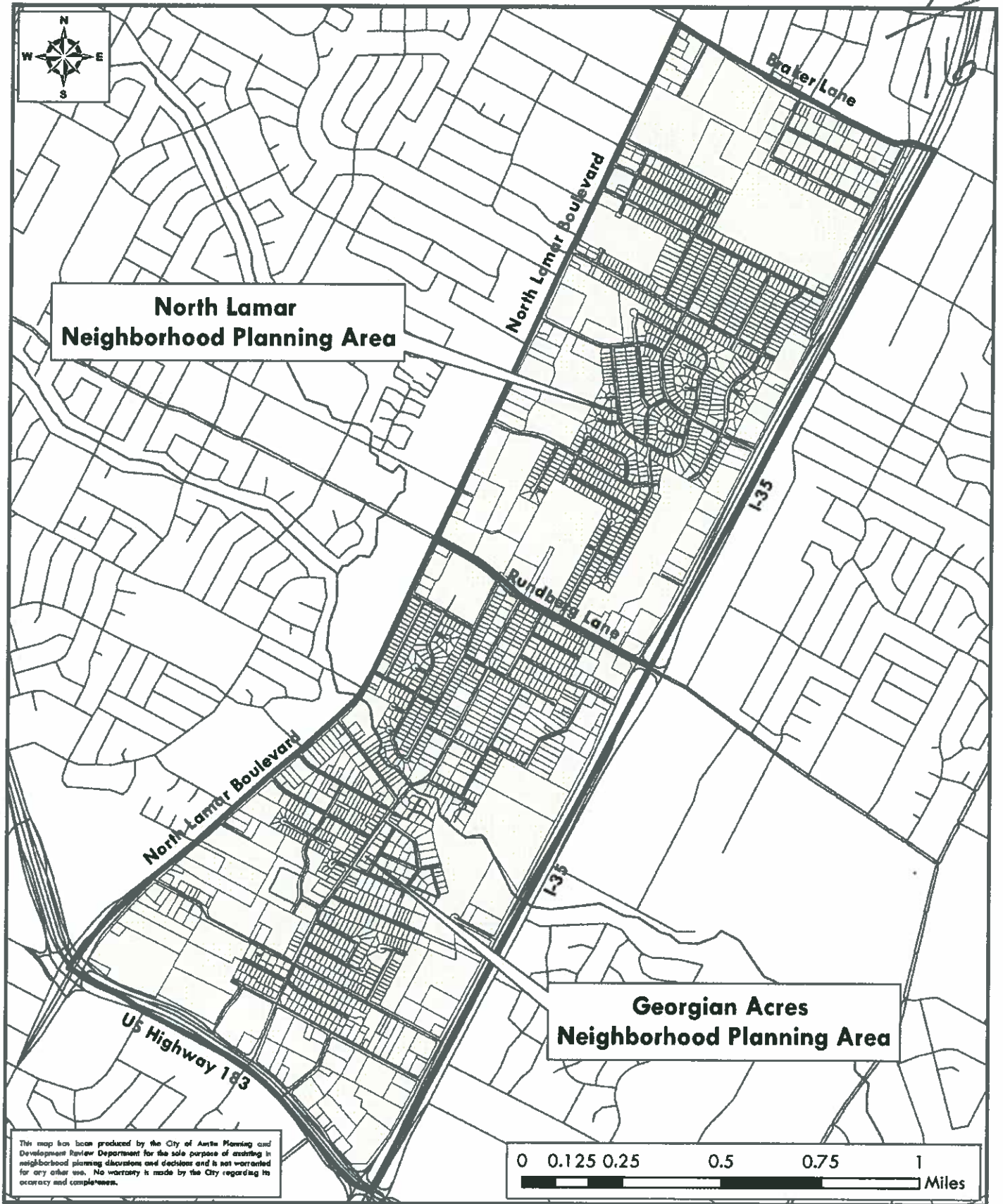
³ The term “stakeholders” is used throughout this plan. Within this document, “stakeholders” refers to those who either reside, work, own property, or some combination thereof, within the NLCNPA.

C23,4
15



City of Austin Neighborhood Planning Areas

C2,3,6



North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area

Planning Area Boundaries

C2,3,6
17

A Community Vision:

A Future History of the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area

As all of the goals and objectives of the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Plan were realized, the whole of the planning area has become a more livable and sustainable community. As businesses began to reinvest along North Lamar Boulevard, more of people's daily needs have become located within a short walk or bicycle trip. This reinvestment has created redevelopment opportunities that allow more people to live closer to their daily necessities and within ready access to high-quality transit. As the sidewalk network is improved and the street trees mature, it has become easier and safer to walk to the store or transit. And, as homeownership rates continue to increase, people's personal investment in the community's quality of life motivates them to be actively engaged and committed to the health and well-being of their part of North Austin.

The North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area (NLCNPA) has emerged as the safe and livable place envisioned in 2010. The neighborhoods are now safe, clean, diverse, vibrant, and friendly. During the intervening twenty years, the hard work and cooperation of residents, property owners, business owners, the City of Austin and Travis County, and non-profit organizations addressed the major problems and issues that concerned the community when the neighborhood plan was adopted by the City Council in 2010.

Crime and Code Violations

After the plan's adoption, the NLCNPA has become a clean and safe community. The residents and business owners developed ongoing partnerships with the Austin Police Department and Travis County District Attorney's Office. Prostitution, drug sales, and associated criminal activities have dissipated throughout the neighborhood. The establishments associated with these activities have cleaned up their businesses or left the neighborhood. The area near the intersection of I-35 and Rundberg Lane, once a center of drug dealing and prostitution, is now a clean, thriving commercial corridor where a number of small, local businesses have set up shop.

The community has worked with City of Austin code inspectors to deal with activities such as illegal dumping, improperly and illegally operating businesses, nuisance properties, and other code violations to improve the quality of life for all residents.

North Lamar Boulevard

Since 2010, North Lamar Boulevard, north of US Highway 183, has emerged as Austin's international Main Street, attracting people from all over Austin and the Central Texas region. Vietnamese pho shops, Indian restaurants and grocery stores, East Asian markets and restaurants, and Mexican and halal butchers are down and across the street from one another. The spaces between these commercial establishments are filled with book stores, boutiques, coffee shops, a variety of other small eateries, and music stores that cater to all segments of Austin's increasingly diverse population.

While the commercial character has become more international, the built environment has become more urban. Slowly, as new investment was made along North Lamar Boulevard, parking lots and ageing single story strip malls disappeared as new buildings were constructed closer to the street and wide, tree-lined sidewalks replaced curb cuts, culverts,

C 2,3,6
18

and dirt paths. At the street level and along the bustling sidewalk, are shops, stores, and restaurants. Along some stretches of North Lamar Boulevard, the new development provides residential uses above the shops. It is interesting to note that many of these households do not have or need a car since most of their daily needs are within a short walk. Additionally, the high-quality transit service along North Lamar Boulevard quickly and efficiently connects them to the rest of Austin.

The Neighborhoods

In the interior of the NLCNPA, the neighborhoods largely retain their single-family character. The homes remain modestly-sized and reasonably-priced. As gas prices steadily increased and the tolerance for lengthy suburban commutes declined in the years since the plan's adoption, people began to look for close-in alternatives for their housing. After years of declining homeownership rates, the pendulum has begun to swing the other direction as more and more properties are switching from rental to owner-occupied. The neighborhoods of the NLCNPA—Georgian Acres, North Creek, and Mockingbird Hill—have once again become the choice of working-class families to buy their homes. As this trend continues, neighbors will work more closely with each other to improve the quality of their community.

Getting Around the Neighborhood

North Lamar Boulevard has evolved from a suburban to an urban roadway, and more and more local-serving businesses have begun to appear. The convenience of these businesses entices people out of their cars. Improvements to the sidewalk network, design changes along several streets, and a street-tree planting program create a pleasant walking environment. These changes have also made bicycle riding much more enjoyable. Changes made in subsequent City of Austin Bicycle Master Plans connect the neighborhoods much more safely and efficiently to the rest of Austin. Georgian Drive is known as one of the best walking and biking streets in the city.

Parks and Open Space

When the plan was adopted in 2010, there were limited opportunities for a neighborhood park but, after much work, an appropriate site was selected. The NLCNPA's newest park provides residents a pleasant refuge from their daily lives and creates the opportunities to be alone or engage with their fellow residents. The park's award-winning design reflects the diverse community along North Lamar Boulevard and is upheld as a national example.

The banks of Little Walnut Creek, although reinforced against erosion, provide natural open space for a healthy wildlife community in the middle of the city.

Although there were heavily wooded portions of the NLCNPA in 2010, there were other areas with little or no tree canopy. In the years following the adoption of the plan, the community, working with the City of Austin and several other organizations, sought to create a lush urban forest. Focused plantings have matured and the urban forest in this part of Austin is having the desired effect—shading in the summer, cleaning the air, and cooling the city.

C 2,3,6
19

A Sustainable Community

As the cost of fossil fuels continue to climb, people in the NLCNPA look to alternatives to power their homes, businesses, and transportation. Changes to the City of Austin Land Development Code have made it easier to install small-scaled wind generators. Incentives and improvements in technology make solar power a more cost-effective and -efficient energy source. At new commercial and mixed-use developments, people are able to charge their plug-in cars, electric bicycles, and electric scooters and motorcycles.

Throughout the NLCNPA, community gardens appear in empty lots, at houses of worship, at large apartment complexes, and in other open spaces previously covered with grass. In the single-family areas, people have converted portions of their yards to vegetable gardens. Those who did not plant gardens have begun to plant more draught-tolerant plant species and engage in more sustainable landscaping practices.

In the years since the adoption of its neighborhood plan, the NLCNPA has become many things to many people. It is many scales: neighborhood, community, and region. It is many modes: by bike, bus, car, or foot. It is many uses: residential, commercial, civic, and mixed use. It is a place to shop, to visit, to do business, and to enjoy. But, most of all, it is a place to call home.

Neighborhood Plan Goals

The following five goals were developed by NLCNPA stakeholders at the Vision and Goals Workshop held January 24, 2008. Each of these goals is to be upheld through the implementation of the objectives and recommendations found throughout this document.

Quality of Life Goal: The North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area shall be a safe, healthy, and well-maintained neighborhood that promotes and preserves the quality of life for both residents and business-owners.

Parks and Trees Goal: Achieve and maintain healthy, sustainable, functional, quality, safe, and aesthetically-beautiful parks and green spaces that provide opportunities for cultural interactions within the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area.

Transportation Goal: Pedestrians, motorists, transit users, bicyclists, and mobility-impaired neighbors should be able to safely and efficiently travel throughout the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area and to the rest of the City.

Infrastructure Goal: Develop infrastructure within the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area that upholds the safety of residents and property- and business-owners.

Land Use Goal: Create a well-balanced land use pattern that benefits everybody in the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area by assigning appropriate land uses to particular properties.

C2,3,4
20

Priority Action Items

During the planning process, NLCNPA stakeholders identified seventeen priority action items. These priority action items are those projects or initiatives most desired to improve the quality of life throughout and enhance the resources within the NLCNPA. The priority action items also serve as a foundation for the NLCNPA Contact Team's recommendations for future implementation efforts in their neighborhood.

At the Final Open House held on March 6, 2010, participants were asked to rank the priority action items in order of their importance or for their potential impact(s) on the neighborhood. The priority action items are listed below according to the rankings received at the final open house:

- Priority Action Item 1** Construct new sidewalks along:
- the south side of Applegate Drive, between North Lamar Boulevard and Brownie Drive
 - North Lamar Boulevard (several locations)
 - the west side of Brownie Drive, between West Applegate Drive and East Grady Drive
 - the north side of West Grady Drive, between North Lamar Boulevard and Georgian Drive
 - the entire north side of Powell Lane
 - the south side of East Lola Drive
 - the entire north side of Deen Avenue
 - the entire north side of Carpenter Avenue
 - the south side of Diamondback Trail between Brownie Drive and the I-35 frontage road
 - either side of Turner Drive, between West Grady Drive and West Applegate Drive
 - either side of Georgian Drive, between Grady Drive and West Applegate Drive
 - either side of Jean Drive, between East Grady Drive and West Applegate Drive
 - either side of McMillan Drive, between East Grady Drive and West Applegate Drive
 - the south side of East Wonsley Drive, between Georgian Drive and the I-35 frontage road
 - the south side of Middle Lane, between North Drive and Capitol Drive (Recommendation 70)
- Priority Action Item 2** Increase Austin Police Department patrols throughout the NLCNPA. (Recommendation 5)
- Priority Action Item 3** Conduct a traffic-calming study to determine possible design changes to the NLCNPA street network to

C2.3,6
21

facilitate traffic flow and reduce hazards throughout the neighborhood. If warranted, implement the recommendation(s) from the traffic-calming study. Special emphasis should be placed on the following thoroughfares:

- Grady Drive
- Masterson Pass-Diamondback Trail
- Powell Lane
- Georgian Drive, between US Highway 183 and Rundberg Lane
- East Drive
- Beaver Street (Recommendation 79)

Priority Action Item 4 In order to preserve the large-lot rural character of the northeastern corner of the Georgian Acres NPA, zoning requests for intense residential development should be denied. (Recommendation 120)

Priority Action Item 5 Consider the incorporation of the following amenities within the design of a new park:

- Drinking fountains for both people and dogs
- Interactive water fountain
- Benches
- Picnic tables
- A pavilion and/or an area that can be reserved for various functions
- Bar-B-Que pits and/or grills
- Trash cans
- "Mutt Mitt" stations with bags and receptacles for pet waste
- Playground equipment
- Walking trails
- Exercise equipment similar to that found at Barrington Park
- An area for a community garden
- Large open space to allow for various activities, including football and kite-flying (Recommendation 47)

Priority Action Item 6 Plant hardy, long-lasting, and drought-tolerant trees throughout the NLCNPA. Specific areas include:

- North Lamar Boulevard, between Braker Lane and US Highway 183

C2,3,6
22

- I-35, between Braker Lane and Barwood Park
- Rundberg Lane, between North Lamar Boulevard and IH-35
- The Chinatown Center and the adjacent property to its east
- The Crockett Center
- The commercial and multi-family properties located along I-35, between Showplace Lane and Little Walnut Creek
- The residential area bounded by Diamondback Trail to the north, Doc Holliday Trail to the east, East Garrett Run to the south, and Derringer Trail to the west (Recommendation 60)

Priority Action Item 7 Guarantee the anonymity and safety of those neighbors reporting code violations. (Recommendation 13)

Priority Action Item 8 Limit the construction of new fast food restaurants throughout the NLCNPA. (Recommendation 31)

Priority Action Item 9 Limit the construction of new, large multi-family residential complexes throughout the NLCNPA. (Recommendation 121)

Priority Action Item 10 Encourage greater investment in those properties owned by absentee landlords. (Recommendation 20)

Priority Action Item 11 Examine the feasibility and support for a local farmers' market. (Recommendation 33)

Priority Action Item 12 Examine flooding issues at the following locations:

- Georgian Drive, just north of US Highway 183
- East Drive, just north of Florence Drive
- Intersection of Shepard Drive and Cooper Drive
- Intersection of Rundberg Lane and the I-35 service road
- North Creek Drive, just north of Rundberg Lane
- Vacant lot north of Showplace Lane
- Masterson Pass, just west of Garrett Run
- Applegate Drive, just west of Turner Drive
- Intersection of Grady Drive and North Lamar
- Intersection of Grady Drive and Turner Drive
- Intersection of Grady Drive and Georgian Drive
- Intersection of Grady Drive and Brownie Drive

C2,3,6
23

- Intersection of Middle Lane and the I-35 frontage road (Recommendation 111)

Priority Action Item 13 Place restrictions on the development of new hotels/motels along I-35. (Recommendation 139)

Priority Action Item 14 Report all substandard living conditions to the City's Code Compliance Department via 311. (Recommendation 18)

Priority Action Item 15 Communicate with the Austin Police Department regarding the enforcement of traffic regulations throughout the NLCNPA. These traffic regulations include:

- Speeding
- "No Through Trucks," especially along Grady Drive
- Jaywalking (Recommendation 80)

Priority Action Item 16 Improve street lighting throughout the NLCNPA. (Recommendation 103)

Priority Action Item 17 Increase patrols near all Capital Metro bus stops within the NLCNPA. (Recommendation 104)



Participants at the March 6, 2010, Final Open House discuss the plan's objectives and recommendations.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD IN CONTEXT

C2, 3, 6
24

The North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area (NLCNPA) is comprised of two neighborhood planning areas: North Lamar and Georgian Acres. Located in the north central portion of Austin's urban core, the NLCNPA is bounded by Braker Lane to the north, Interstate 35 (I-35) to the east, US Highway 183 to the south, and North Lamar Boulevard to the west. See the *Planning Area Boundaries* map on page 4.

Lay of the Land

The NLCNPA is an approximately 1,297 acre urban neighborhood with seemingly suburban characteristics. Development in the neighborhood is similar to other areas that have once been at the fringe of a sprawling city: the NLCNPA is marked by strip malls, suburban-style tract homes, and culs-de-sac. The majority of non-residential and multifamily (i.e., apartments) development has occurred at or near the periphery of the NLCNPA; the area's interior is made up of mostly single family neighborhoods. Though mostly developed, the NLCNPA contains several undeveloped properties largely within or near the residential portion of the neighborhood.

The most prominent natural feature of the NLCNPA is Little Walnut Creek and its tributaries; originating northeast of the planning area, Little Walnut Creek bisects the Georgian Acres planning area as it runs southwest toward the Colorado River. The more rural character of the Georgian Acres area can likely be attributed to the colorful history of Little Walnut Creek. The creek had been the site of early battles between Native Americans and European settlers; later, farmers and ranchers were drawn to the creek for the fertile soils it provided for both their crops and livelihoods. Erosion has threatened the creek and adjacent properties for years; however, in 1995, a portion of the creek's banks were stabilized to prevent further erosion in the area.



Little Walnut Creek as seen from Georgian Drive

Built Environment

The NLCNPA is a fairly new addition to the City of Austin: the neighborhood had been entirely annexed into the city limits between 1945 and 1984. Most of the NLCNPA has been developed, with much of the development activity occurring since annexation of the area began. Development, including the housing stock, is older in Georgian Acres than in

C2,3,4
25

North Lamar; the newer, suburban-style development in the North Lamar planning area is a result of its growth at the outer fringe of the central city.



Chinatown Center is an example of commercial development in the NLCNPA.

Of the developed properties within the NLCNPA, the majority contains single-family homes. In 2008, nearly 73 percent were single-family residences. Most of these homes are located within the interior of the neighborhood and have styles that reflect the era in which they were built; the majority of the single-family residences in the NLCNPA are single-story, ranch-style homes. Despite a large proportion of single-family *properties*, the NLCNPA has a substantial amount of multifamily *housing units*. While only 5.5 percent of properties contain a multifamily use, 60 percent of all NLCNPA housing units were in multifamily developments.⁴



Single-family homes in Georgian Acres (left) and North Lamar (right) exemplify the residential character of the NLCNPA.

Most of the neighborhood's commercial development lies at its periphery. Suburban-style, automobile-oriented commercial establishments dominate North Lamar Boulevard: the design of these establishments (including strip malls and fast food restaurants) largely separates them from the roadway by big parking lots. Industrial-type commercial businesses and travel-related establishments (i.e., hotels, motels, and service stations) are located along the interstate frontage to provide easy access to those traveling along the I-35 thoroughfare.

Neighborhood History and Background

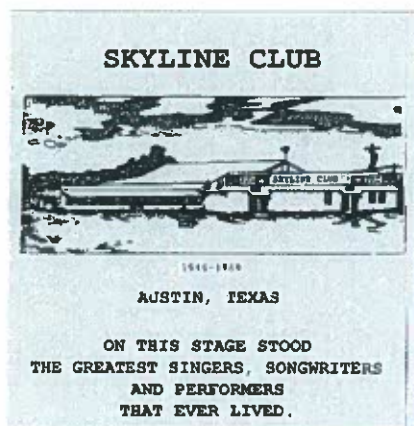
Although a relatively new portion of the City, the NLCNPA has a rich history that has established its role within the City of Austin. While North Lamar Boulevard and Little Walnut Creek lend themselves to the colorful past that has helped shape much of north Austin (including the NLCNPA), more recent events, however, will provide for a more volatile history of this neighborhood.

⁴ According to the 2000 Census, approximately 26 percent of all housing units in the NLCNPA were single-family; 60 percent were multifamily units; 13 percent were duplex, triplex, or fourplex units.

C2,3,4
26

North Lamar Boulevard

As the namesake of the NLCNPA, North Lamar Boulevard has helped shape the north Austin area. Serving as the western boundary for the neighborhood, North Lamar Boulevard is also a historic north-south thoroughfare for the entire City of Austin. An ox-cart trail predates the current path of North Lamar Boulevard; this trail carried Spanish teamsters en route to San Antonio through the north Austin area, including the NLCNPA.



Brochure for the Skyline Club
Photo courtesy of: <http://tryr.tripod.com/chistnlamar.html>

Now marked by myriad commercial establishments, North Lamar Boulevard was once a prominent route to the many farms and homesteads that dotted the north Austin landscape, including some in or near the NLCNPA. The route also led to several popular nightclubs and music venues that lied outside the City's original limits; and, some of these clubs played host to many famous musicians. In particular, at the Skyline Club, performances by Elvis Presley, Hank Williams, and Johnny Horton entertained the north Austin area for decades until its closure in 1989.

Fiskville⁵

Just north of Austin, the village of Fiskville was founded in the early 1870s near the convergence of Little Walnut Creek and US Highway 81 (now North Lamar Boulevard). Named for pioneer settlers George Greenleaf Fisk and Josiah Fisk, this small community was the first stage stop between north Austin and Georgetown.

Once settled, Fiskville became a growing community with an estimated population of 120 in the mid-1890s. A steam flour mill and cotton gin, general store, church, and school were all constructed to serve Fiskville's growing population. However, by the early 20th Century, the community's population began to decline as people moved to nearby Austin and the additional opportunities it provided them. Although its population declined considerably, Fiskville retained its identity until it was annexed to the City of Austin in the mid-1960s. One of the few remnants of the Fiskville community is the Fiskville Cemetery, located in the heart of the Heritage Hills-Windsor Hills neighborhood, just outside of the NLCNPA.



Remnants of the Fiskville stage stop
Photo courtesy of:
<http://www.d.austin.tx.us/library/ahc/outside/north.htm>

Crime and the Neighborhood's Response

In recent years, a dramatic rise in criminal activity has occurred in north Austin. For each year in the five-year period between 2004 and 2008, an average of nearly 3,100 crimes occurred in the NLCNPA; this average accounts for approximately 2 percent of *all* crimes

⁵ For more information on Fiskville, refer to the *Handbook of Texas Online*. (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/FF/hvf23.html>)

C2, 3, 6
27

committed within the City of Austin's limits for this same period. Though the actual crime rate has varied between 2004 and 2008 for the NLCNPA, it has stayed fairly on par with that of the City of Austin. However, in 2006, the NLCNPA saw a nearly 72 percent increase in criminal activity, with an across-the-board increase in all major offenses. The Austin Police Department partially attributes this rise in crime to the addition of Hurricane Katrina evacuees to the NLCNPA population between 2005 and 2006.

Table A. NLCNPA Total Crime Data Summary, 2004-2008

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Murders	2	0	1	2	0
Rape/Sex-Related Crimes	14	9	23	12	38
Violent Crimes	145	142	181	143	166
Property Crimes	1,184	1,133	1,378	1,277	1,054
Drug-related crimes	245	n/a	722	515	624
Prostitution	158	122	146	91	39
Other, non-violent offenses	953	775	1,299	1,239	1,635
Total	2,701	2,181	3,750	3,279	3,556

Source: Austin Police Department

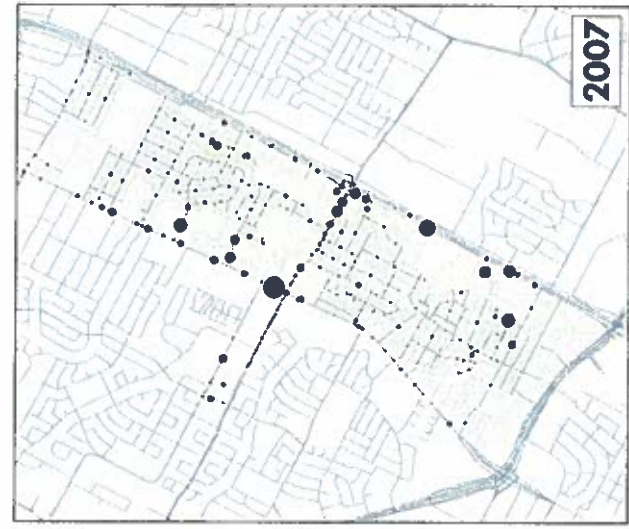
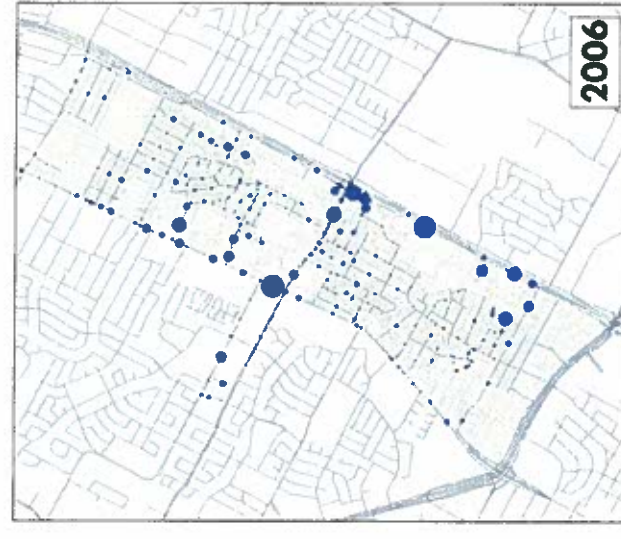
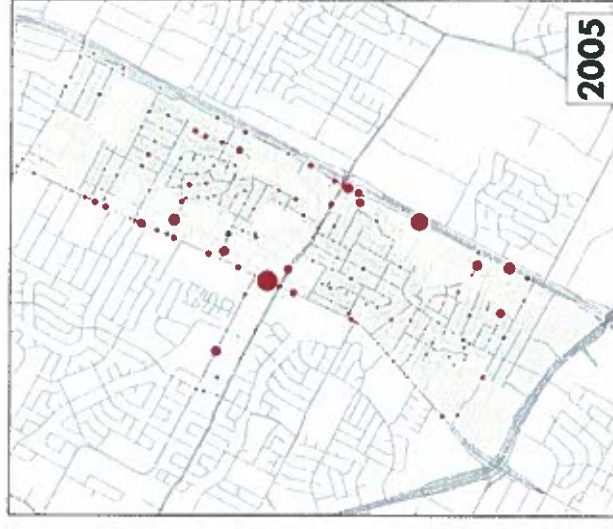
Non-violent offenses (e.g., domestic disturbances, criminal mischief) and property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft) have consistently made up the majority of criminal activity in the NLCNPA (Table A); however, the NLCNPA has recently become a focal point in the City's fight against prostitution and drug-related offenses. Most of the crimes have occurred on the area's main thoroughfares: North Lamar Boulevard, Rundberg Lane, and the I-35 frontage road (see the *Criminal Activity Hotspots, 2004-2008, Map* on page 16). Those locations with the most occurrences of crime include commercial establishments along North Lamar Boulevard, large apartment complexes on I-35 and Masterson Pass, motels at

the intersection of Rundberg Lane and I-35, and the Sam Rayburn Drive residential area.

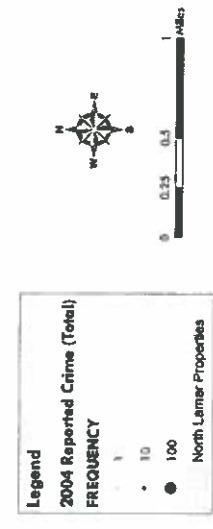


The front page article of Austin American Statesman's Metro Section (August 4, 2007) denotes a community march against crime.

In response to the area's rise in crime, the NLCNPA community has sponsored neighborhood marches, barbeques, and protests to bring much-needed attention to the serious conditions that have greatly affected the quality of life here in recent years. Residents have focused on ridding their neighborhood of criminals and of those businesses that harbor them. Their efforts have been successful by garnering support from various agencies including



North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area **Criminal Activity Hotspots, 2004 - 2008** (Total Data)



This map has been produced by the City of Austin Planning and Development Review Department for the sole purpose of assisting in neighborhood planning discussions and decisions and is not warranted for any other use. No warranty is made by the City regarding its accuracy and completeness.

Data Source: Austin Police Department

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28

$$\begin{array}{r} 2,316 \\ - 29 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

the District Attorney's Office and the Austin Police Department. Crime will continue to be a recurrent challenge for the NLCNPA. However, with the continued involvement of residents and area agencies, the neighborhood will surely become a safer, more secure area for its residents, businesses, and visitors.

Neighborhood Changes

The face of the NLCNPA resident is changing; this suburban community has become more heterogeneous and diverse in recent decades with the addition of many foreign-born immigrants (Table B). Central Americans, Mexicans, and Asians are now considering north Austin home. In 2000, nearly one-third of the NLCNPA population was born outside of the United States; only 16.6 percent of the entire City's population was foreign-born. This demographic shift is reflected in an increase in the number of international businesses area-wide: grocery stores, shopping centers, restaurants, and other professional businesses have located within the NLCNPA to accommodate those newly-arrived to the area.

Table B. Foreign-Born Population, 2000

	Georgian Acres	North Lamar	NLCNPA	City of Austin
Total Population	8,593	5,888	14,481	656,562
Foreign-Born Population	2,769	1,843	4,612	109,006
Percent Foreign-Born	32.2%	31.3%	31.8%	16.6%

Source: US Census Bureau

Austin is a city of renters; being a college town with a relatively young, mobile population, home-ownership is not as common as in other comparable cities. The NLCNPA is no different than the City as a whole; a majority of renters call this neighborhood home. However, renters far outnumber homeowners in the NLCNPA: in 2000, nearly 82 percent of all occupied housing units were occupied by renters (Table C). The rentership rate fell slightly between 1990 and 2000; however, based upon the trend set between the two decades, it is safe to assume that this rate will remain relatively high in this area for years to come.

Table C. Occupied Housing Units by Tenure, 1990-2000

	Georgian Acres	North Lamar	NLCNPA	City of Austin
Occupied Housing Units, 1990	3,274	1,689	4,963	192,148
Renter-Occupied	2,868	1,267	4,135	114,174
Owner-Occupied	406	422	828	77,974
Percentage Renter-Occupied, 1990			83.3%	59.4%
Occupied Housing Units, 2000	3,621	2,094	5,715	265,649
Renter-Occupied	3,128	1,534	4,662	146,547
Owner-Occupied	493	560	1,053	119,102
Percentage Renter-Occupied, 2000			81.6%	55.2%

Source: US Census Bureau

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30

The high rentership rate *and* disproportionate number of area rental units are of great concern to many NLCNPA stakeholders. The lack of homeownership or homeownership opportunities in an area could potentially lead to its overall instability: as fewer people become personally invested in their community (i.e., by owning a home), the less likely they will remain or cultivate any future there. Neighborhood stabilization through homeownership opportunities was discussed throughout the planning process, especially when discussing future land uses for particular properties. See the Land Use chapter for a further discussion on the special use infill options and their potential impacts on the NLCNPA.

Area Schools

The NLCNPA contains two Austin Independent School District (AISD) elementary schools within its boundaries: Barrington Elementary and Walnut Creek Elementary. Both schools have been cornerstones of the north Austin community since the 1960s. Walnut Creek and Barrington were built in 1961 and 1969, respectively. The construction of these schools signaled AISD's anticipation of the area's significant growth in population, especially that of school-aged children. In recent years, both schools have become heavily- or overpopulated as the NLCNPA and surrounding areas continue to grow.



Scripted signage of Barrington Elementary



Entrance to Walnut Creek Elementary

Barrington Elementary School was named in honor of Mollie Barrington, a long-time AISD teacher who championed the development of both spelling and handwriting skills in her students. Thus, to honor this woman, Barrington Elementary is the only school in the district with its name written in script on the front of its building. Like other landmarks in the area, Walnut Creek Elementary shares its name with the creek that runs through the planning area.

Both elementary schools serve the NLCNPA not only as education centers, but as places for neighbors and residents to commune, gather, or recreate. Barrington Elementary, especially, provides the neighborhood with one of its only two public, park-like settings.

Gethsemane Lutheran Church⁶

The tradition of Gethsemane Lutheran Church began in late 1868 with the congregation of several Swedish Lutheran immigrants. Originally, this congregation met in a stone and wooden church building in what is now downtown Austin; later, between 1883 and 1963,

⁶ For a more detailed history, see the "125 Years of Faith: A History" booklet provided by the Gethsemane Lutheran Church.

they occupied the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Gethsemane Church building at 16th Street and Congress Avenue.



Gethsemane Lutheran Church

Having outgrown its previous two locations, the Gethsemane congregation built a large, 10-acre campus-like church near the intersection of Anderson Lane (US Highway 183) and I-35 in the NLCNPA. The new church buildings were dedicated beginning in 1963. The church's sanctuary serves as a "lighthouse on a hill" as its 36-foot high stained glass windows and wall front US Highway 183. The stained-glass windows were designed and constructed by Gabriel Loire's studio in Chartres, France, and, upon their placement on the Gethsemane site, were the first of their kind in the state of Texas.

Gethsemane Lutheran Church has become an integral part of the NLCNPA community and to the entire City of Austin. With several community outreach programs, the Gethsemane congregation reaches those not just within its vicinity but to those in all parts of the Austin community.

Statistical Profile

Since 1990, the Austin area has become one of the fastest growing metropolitan regions in the nation. While a lot of this growth occurred in the more suburban portions of the metropolitan region, the City of Austin's population growth rate was 41 percent between 1990 and 2000. The NLCNPA's growth has been on par with that of the City of Austin, growing over 37 percent for the same time period; refer to Table D for these trends. Austin and its core neighborhoods (including the NLCNPA) continue to grow: in July 2008, the US Census Bureau estimated that 757,688 people resided in the City of Austin.⁷

Table D. Population, 1990-2000

	Georgian Acres	North Lamar	NLCNPA	City of Austin
1990 Population	6,575	3,976	10,551	465,622
2000 Population	8,593	5,888	14,481	656,562
1990-2000 Population Change	2,018	1,912	3,930	190,940
Percent Change	30.7%	48.1%	37.2%	41.0%

Source: US Census Bureau

Perhaps the most significant indicator of changes in the population is the increase in the number of people living in each household (Table E). Between 1990 and 2000, the average household size in the NLCNPA increased by nearly 12.5 percent, from an average of 2.35 persons per household to an average of 2.64. By contrast, the average household size increased by only 3 percent for the whole of Austin, from 2.33 to 2.40 persons per

⁷ Detailed population estimates for the NLCNPA are not readily available for 2008. This data is only available through the decennial census data released by the United States Census Bureau.

household. More telling is the relatively flat rate of residential development within the NLCNPA between 2000 and the second quarter of 2007; only 65 building permits were issued during this period. It can be assumed, then, that as average household sizes continue to rise in the NLCNPA, where residential development has all but stagnated, the existing housing stock has become more crowded.

Table E. Persons per Household, 1990-2000⁸

		Persons per Occupied Unit, 1990	Persons per Occupied Unit, 2000
Georgian Acres	Census Tract 18.04, Block Group 3	2.11	2.28
	Census Tract 18.06, Block Group 1	2.95	3.14
	Census Tract 18.06, Block Group 2	1.66	2.07
	Census Tract 18.06, Block Group 3	2.05	2.50
North Lamar	Census Tract 18.23, Block Group 1	2.25	2.77
	Census Tract 18.23, Block Group 2	3.07	3.09
City of Austin		2.33	2.40

Source: US Census Bureau

The NLCNPA is a relatively young neighborhood (Table F). In 1990 and 2000, nearly half of the NLCNPA population was between the ages of 15 and 34; 50.5 percent and 45.6 percent of the population was made up of 15- to 34-year-olds in 1990 and 2000, respectively. However, the number of 45- to 54-year-olds more than doubled between 1990 and 2000, growing by 105.5 percent. While the population ages, NLCNPA residents are also forming families, indicated by the significant gains in the younger cohorts (ages under 5 to 24). The increases in both the younger- and middle-aged cohorts also suggest families' attraction to the NLCNPA and its relatively affordable housing.

Table F. NLCNPA Population by Age, 1990-2000

Cohort	Population		% Change
	1990	2000	
under 5	1,027	1,498	45.9%
5 to 9	733	1,159	58.1%
10 to 14	533	788	47.8%
15 to 24	2,284	3,102	35.8%
25 to 34	3,048	3,501	14.9%
35 to 44	1,431	2,142	49.7%
45 to 54	620	1,274	105.5%
55 to 64	399	524	31.3%
65 and over	476	493	3.6%
Total	10,551	14,481	37.2%

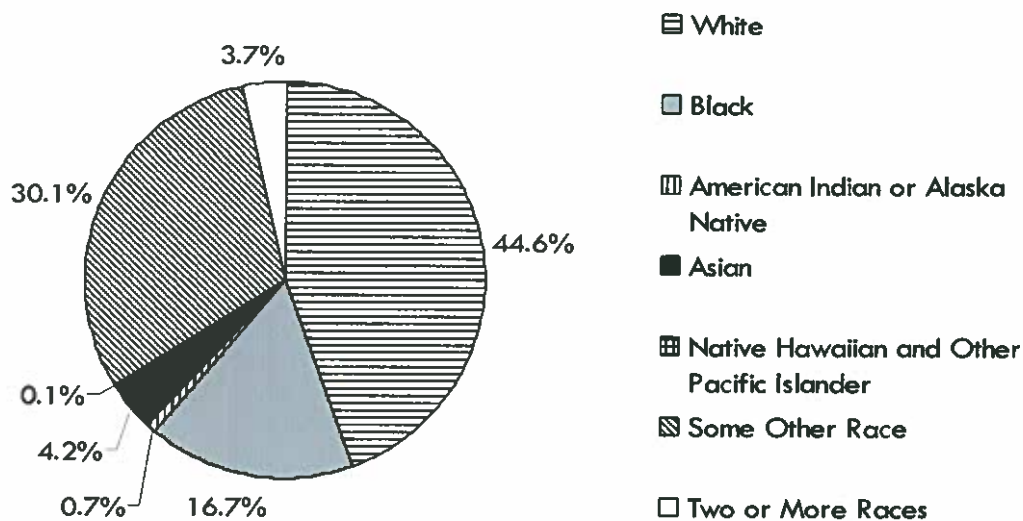
Source: US Census Bureau

⁸ The data presented in Tables E and K is Block Group-level data; a Block Group is one of the smallest geographical divisions used by the US Census Bureau to gather data for a specific area. The data could not be combined on a planning area-wide level (as found in other tables) so to not skew their results.

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33

In recent years, the NLCNPA has become a minority-majority neighborhood, where no ethnic group has a majority of the area's population (Figure G). In 2000, whites made up 44.6 percent of the area's total population; persons of other races, blacks, and Asians made up the remaining portion of the population with a representation of 30.1 percent, 16.7 percent, and 4.2 percent, respectively. Greatly contributing to the majority-minority representation in the area is the substantial growth in the Hispanic or Latino population here (Table H). Between 1990 and 2000, the number of people of Hispanic or Latino descent increased by nearly two-and-a-half times. Though the absolute increase in this portion of the population is telling, the percentage share Hispanic or Latino persons have of the NLCNPA's total population is even more so: of the 1990 population, 28.1 percent of the residents were of Hispanic or Latino origin; in 2000, that share rose to 49.9 percent.⁹ This data solidifies the NLCNPA's position as a popular destination, or "immigrant gateway," for recent Hispanic or Latino immigrants, especially those from Mexico and Central America.¹⁰

Figure G. NLCNPA Percentage Share of Races, 2000



Source: US Census Bureau

⁹ Persons of Hispanic or Latino origins fall within most of the ethnic groups as determined by the United States Census Bureau; Hispanics or Latinos can be white, black, American Indian, etc. For example, in 2000, the 49.9 percentage share of Hispanic or Latino descendants falls across the entire racial spectrum shown in Figure G; thus, a specific racial or ethnic group does *not* contain the entire share of Hispanic or Latino descendants.

¹⁰ Refer to: Singer, Audrey. "The Rise of New Immigrant Gateways." The Brookings Institution: Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy (2004): 1-36.

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34

Table H. Persons of Hispanic or Latino Origin, 1990-2000

	Total		
	1990	2000	% Change
Georgian Acres	1,876	4,329	130.8%
North Lamar	1,088	2,897	166.3%
NLCNPA	2,964	7,226	143.8%
Percent Hispanic	28.1%	49.9%	

Source: US Census Bureau

NLCNPA residents are generally less educated than other City of Austin residents. Educational attainment levels (Table J) trend toward residents earning less than a college-level education for the NLCNPA: a higher percentage of those without a college-level degree live within the neighborhood. In fact, between 1990 and 2000, the NLCNPA has become a less-educated neighborhood while the City has seen greater gains in educational attainment amongst its population. In direct correlation to the low educational attainment of NLCNPA residents, their relative wealth is comparatively lower than the City of Austin as well. Though substantial gains were made in the area's median family income between 1990 and 2000 (Table K), in 2000, the income levels in the NLCNPA were between 34.4 and 51.4 percent less than the City's median family income.

Table J. Educational Attainment (for persons 25 years old or older), 2000

	Georgian Acres	North Lamar	NLCNPA	City of Austin
Less than 9th Grade	18.3%	16.4%	17.5%	8.3%
9th - 12th Grade, no diploma	11.7%	14.6%	12.9%	8.3%
High School Graduate	27.6%	26.1%	27.0%	17.0%
Some College, no degree	22.3%	21.6%	22.1%	21.1%
Associate's Degree	4.7%	7.6%	5.9%	5.0%
Bachelor's Degree	11.7%	9.8%	10.9%	25.7%
Graduate or Professional Degree	3.6%	3.9%	3.7%	14.7%

Source: US Census Bureau

Table K. Median Family Income (MFI), 1989-1999

		1989 MFI	1999 MFI
Georgian Acres	Census Tract 18.04, Block Group 3	\$15,417	\$29,667
	Census Tract 18.06, Block Group 1	\$32,750	\$31,250
	Census Tract 18.06, Block Group 2	\$19,688	\$26,310
	Census Tract 18.06, Block Group 3	\$16,660	\$27,589
North Lamar	Census Tract 18.23, Block Group 1	\$27,429	\$35,461
	Census Tract 18.23, Block Group 2	\$21,932	\$30,263
City of Austin		\$33,481	\$54,091

Source: US Census Bureau

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35

Planning Process

The nearly two and one-half year NLCNPA planning process began with background research and field work in preparation for the public kick-off event held on November 15, 2007. At subsequent meetings, neighborhood planning staff assisted NLCNPA stakeholders in the development of goals and objectives related to the five subject areas addressed by this neighborhood plan: quality of life, parks and trees, transportation, infrastructure, and land use.

Planning Process Objectives

Neighborhood planning staff strove to meet the following objectives in order to provide NLCNPA stakeholders with a clear, meaningful, and effective planning process:

- Build trust between the City of Austin and the stakeholders in the planning area.
- Establish points of contact with other City departments and organizations, such that their expertise may be utilized for stakeholder meetings and in creating feasible and practicable recommendations.
- Encourage the involvement of all stakeholders throughout the planning process.
- Provide educational materials (including web-based resources) to all stakeholders so to help them understand all parts of the planning process and its outcome(s).
- Build consensus among stakeholders regarding participation processes, goals, objectives, and recommendations.
- Create a sense of ownership and pride for the neighborhood plan.

Neighborhood Planning Process Overview

Once background research and initial outreach efforts were completed, planning staff invited all NLCNPA residents, businesses, and property owners to attend the November 2007 kick-off event. Stakeholders were also invited to participate in the neighborhood's initial survey to provide greater first-hand insight into the area's history, qualities, and characteristics. Staff also requested contact information of all interested parties as a means for communication throughout the planning process; neighborhood meeting information and all other process-related announcements were sent via the provided contact information.



Participants at the November 2007 Kick-Off Event

The framework for the NLCNPA planning process was then built around the information staff received at both the First Workshop (December 2007) and the Vision and Goals Workshop (January 2008). Subsequent neighborhood meetings focused on those important issues identified by area stakeholders in those earlier meetings; these topical meetings (including crime and code enforcement, transportation, parks, etc.) were held throughout 2008. All meeting materials were placed on the NLCNPA website for review by all interested parties. For a detailed summary of meetings held throughout this process, see Appendix A.

C2-3,6
36

Using information received at the topical meetings, staff began to draft the neighborhood plan, including the objectives and recommendations for each of the five identified areas of concern. To close out the first half of the planning process, all NLCNPA stakeholders were given an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the draft plan at the Mid-Process Open House (January 2009).

The second half of the NLCNPA planning process shifted stakeholders' focus toward land use and zoning issues. The land use and zoning workshops are arguably the most important of the process; the recommendations formed at these workshops are those that guide the area's development for the foreseeable future. Land use discussions began with the identification of areas throughout the neighborhood that need change. Stakeholders were asked to decide if the current land uses of particular properties were appropriate or not. Planning staff arranged the discussions around the five main thoroughfares of the NLCNPA (North Lamar Boulevard, Braker Lane, I-35, US Highway 183, and Rundberg Lane) as it was anticipated that most land use changes would occur there.



Participants at the January 2009
Mid-Process Open House

Zoning workshops followed with zoning recommendations based on the land use decisions made by stakeholders. These recommendations focused mainly on prohibiting certain uses on various properties along those thoroughfares mentioned above or bringing properties with incorrect zoning into conformance.

With the completion of the NLCNPA neighborhood plan, all area stakeholders had an additional opportunity to review and provide feedback on the draft plan at the Final Open House held on March 6, 2010; stakeholders were also invited to provide feedback through the final survey. Once all comments were reviewed and the plan document finalized, planning staff took the neighborhood plan before the Planning Commission and City Council in the Spring of 2010 for official approval and adoption. The NLCNPA plan was adopted on May 27, 2010.

Outreach and Participation

Planning staff utilized numerous outreach strategies to encourage continued involvement in the neighborhood planning process. For the NLCNPA plan, meeting notices were mailed to those on the interest list, posted online, and, on various occasions, were placed in public spaces or sent home with area elementary students. Several volunteers delivered meeting notices to their neighbors and area neighborhood associations announced NLCNPA meetings in their newsletters. On several occasions, planning staff coordinated outreach efforts with the North Creek/Georgian Acres and Mockingbird Hill neighborhood associations.

Upon the stakeholders' request, all mailed meeting notices were provided in both English and Spanish to accommodate the large Hispanic community living in the NLCNPA. When

C2-3,6
37

necessary throughout the process, planning staff provided translation services for Spanish-speaking meeting participants.

It has been the goal of both planning staff and NLCNPA stakeholders to encourage

increased participation of fellow residents and neighbors, including renters, low-income or Spanish-speaking residents, business owners, or developers. Despite the outreach efforts mentioned above, the participation level in the NLCNPA planning process was limited at best; an average of approximately 18 stakeholders attended neighborhood meetings. Although meeting participation was low, those who were involved participated with great enthusiasm and with consideration towards the needs of the entire planning area, including those stakeholders not in attendance.

Help Create the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Plan

You're invited to create a vision for your neighborhood within the Georgian Acres or North Lamar Planning Areas through the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Plan.

The Neighborhood Planning Process needs YOUR involvement. If you are a...

- Home-Owner
- Renter
- Non-Resident Property Owner
- Business Owner
- Employee
- Church or School Representative
- Neighborhood Group
- Invited Party

Then, you are a stakeholder within this planning process. And, as a stakeholder, you have an important voice in determining the future of your neighborhood.

The success of the plan depends on your participation. You are encouraged to get involved early in the process, and your first opportunity is to attend the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Kick-Off meeting!

The Neighborhood Kick-Off Meeting is Thursday, November 18, 2007 from 6:30 to 8:30 at Harrison Elementary School.

Please see reverse side regarding other opportunities for participation.

The neighborhood planning process will address important issues that include:

- Parks and the Environment
- Transportation
- Green Design and Neighborhood Character
- Land Use and Zoning (development uses, etc.)
- Other issues that affect your neighborhood

Example of a mail-out notice

Coordination with City Departments and Other Agencies

Planning staff worked closely with staff from other City departments (e.g., Parks and Recreation, Public Works) and other outside agencies (e.g., Capital Metro, Texas Transportation Institute) throughout the planning process. Representatives from these departments and agencies were invited to participate in the process and, on numerous occasions, attended neighborhood meetings to provide additional insight to neighborhood stakeholders regarding particular projects in their area. Their participation also helped frame some of the recommendations found throughout the NLCNPA plan.

Many of the objectives and recommendations in this plan fall under the scope of other City departments and outside agencies. Therefore, these departments or agencies are responsible for the implementation of those plan recommendations. Upon completion of the neighborhood plan, representatives of these departments and agencies reviewed the document and provided planning staff with invaluable input regarding the feasibility of implementing its recommendations.

It is the goal of planning staff that this substantial review will facilitate the successful implementation of the NLCNPA plan's recommendations given adequate funding and continued community support.

C2-3,4
38

QUALITY of LIFE

The North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area shall be a safe, healthy, and well-maintained neighborhood that promotes and preserves the quality of life for both residents and business owners.

The North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area (NLCNPA) possesses several valuable assets that enhance the quality of life for area residents and property- and business owners. The NLCNPA is one of the few relatively affordable neighborhoods remaining in Austin's central city, attracting new homeowners and homeownership opportunities to the area. Recently, the area has also become more diverse, making the neighborhood a unique and interesting one in which to live, visit, or cultivate a business. Bounded by several major thoroughfares, the NLCNPA affords its residents and businesses great access to various points throughout the City of Austin and beyond.

Despite the assets mentioned above, several issues have compromised the quality of life of the NLCNPA in recent years. Through the planning process, neighborhood stakeholders expressed intent to address the general well-being of the NLCNPA and its citizens. Their concerns focused upon crime and public safety, code violations and enforcement, as well as health-related matters and sustainability.

Crime and Public Safety

The NLCNPA has been greatly affected by crime in recent years. Nearly two percent of the City of Austin's criminal activity has taken place within the NLCNPA between 2004 and 2008.¹¹ The rate of criminal activity has varied from year to year here; yet, the NLCNPA has become a hotbed of prostitution, drugs, and violent crimes for the City of Austin. Throughout the planning process, stakeholders strongly expressed the desire to improve the safety of their neighborhood while combating the crime that has affected the area for years.

Please note that several safety measures are related to specific topics and have been explicitly addressed in the respective, topical chapters within this plan.

❖ The NLCNPA should become a safe neighborhood.

The NLCNPA has steadfastly become a less desirable neighborhood due, in part, to the high volume of recent criminal activity. Rather than attracting quality, long-term residents and businesses, the NLCNPA has become an attractive area to an array of criminals (and to businesses that harbor them), making this once safe neighborhood into a high-crime area.

Since 2006, the north Austin community, including the NLCNPA, has been working closely with the Austin Police Department to deter crime and enhance public safety in

¹¹ Refer to the "Neighborhood in Context" chapter for a more detailed summary of crime statistics for the NLCNPA.

C2-3,6
39

the area. Strong community organization and leadership are needed in an area of such high needs as the NLCNPA and the foundations of both have become present in recent years. Small successes have been made en route to becoming a safer neighborhood, yet much is left to be done to ensure safety throughout the NLCNPA.



Citizens and APD officers prepare for the December 1, 2007, March on Rundberg.
Photo courtesy of the Austin Police Department

Objective Q.1: Promote public safety through community organization.

- Recommendation 1** Encourage membership to and participation in area neighborhood associations.
- Recommendation 2** Ensure continued communication between area neighborhood associations and the Austin Police Department.
- Recommendation 3** Continue the community partnership with the North Austin Coalition of Neighborhoods (NACN).
- Recommendation 4** Create neighborhood watch and/or crime watch groups.

Objective Q.2: Ensure public safety throughout the NLCNPA.

- Recommendation 5** Increase Austin Police Department patrols throughout the NLCNPA.
- Recommendation 6** Study the feasibility of reinstating the Austin Police Department's Violent Crimes Task Force in north Austin, including the NLCNPA.
- Recommendation 7** Encourage area residents to report all criminal activities that occur in their neighborhood.
- Recommendation 8** Adopt and apply those principles set forth by the Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

C2-3,6
40

(CPTED) tool. Refer to the box below for information regarding CPTED.

Recommendation 9 Encourage the use of a CPTED Neighborhood Safety Audit similar to the one used in Phoenix, Arizona. See Appendix B for a sample audit form.

What is Crime Prevention through Environmental Design?

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is an urban planning tool used to design a safe community. The designs incorporate the built environment and land use characteristics to deter criminal activities and behaviors while providing the ability to have "eyes on the street."

CPTED consists of four principles to help reduce the incidence of crime in an area. These principles are:

- 1) **Territoriality:** defining the ownership of a particular space (e.g., public vs. private space). Territorial control prevents the use of a space by unauthorized users.
- 2) **Access Control:** denial of access to specific crime targets by minimizing uncontrolled movement within a specific area.
- 3) **Natural Surveillance:** the ability to easily observe all users of a defined space, including potential criminals.
- 4) **Maintenance and Management:** effective upkeep of those items that support the intended purpose and use of specific spaces (e.g., lighting, landscaping).

The adoption of these principles does not necessarily guarantee a reduction in criminal activity; however, CPTED has been successful in many communities including Phoenix, Arizona; Sarasota, Florida; and, Toronto.

For more information regarding CPTED, read the National Crime Prevention Council's *Designing Safer Communities: A Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Handbook* (1997) or consult these websites:

- http://www.cptedsecurity.com/cpted_design_guidelines.htm
- <http://www.cpted-watch.com>
- <http://www.phoenix.gov/POLICE/cpted1.html>

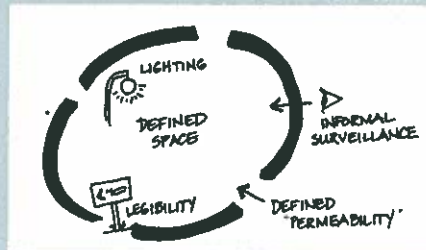


Diagram of CPTED

Source: <http://www.cityofvancouver.us/calendar.asp?forumid=51950>

Code Enforcement

The City Code is a body of law that regulates certain activities within the City of Austin; its provisions are meant to provide all citizens with a safe, healthy city in which to live and work. In recent years, though, code violations have become increasingly prevalent within the NLCNPA. Issues related to poor property maintenance, improper parking of vehicles,

C2-3,6
41

illegal businesses, overcrowded housing, and illegal dumping have been identified throughout the planning process.

❖ **The amount of code violations occurring within the NLCNPA should be reduced.**

Like the NLCNPA, areas with high amounts of code violations are often in some state of socioeconomic or demographic transition, with many residents seemingly unaware of the health and safety laws set forth in the City Code. A lack of awareness regarding these regulations oftentimes leads to unsafe or unsanitary conditions within which these residents may live. Education regarding the City Code should be provided to these citizens; however, adherence to and enforcement of its regulations will definitely improve the current conditions found within the NLCNPA neighborhoods.

Objective Q.3: Promote increased communication between NLCNPA neighbors and the City of Austin's Code Compliance Department.

Recommendation 10 Continue the distribution of the *Code Enforcement* and *Aplicación del Código* pamphlets throughout the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 11 Develop and distribute additional educational materials regarding code enforcement in several Asian languages.

Properly Reporting Code Enforcement Issues to 311

1. Call 311 and then push prompt 2. You will be directed to City of Austin information.
 - Give the dispatcher the address and tell them you are reporting a code violation.
 - Ask the dispatcher to repeat back anything that might be unclear or confusing.
 - Write down the complaint number.
2. Seven business days later, call the Code Enforcement North District Program Specialist at 974-9036.
 - Give the Code Enforcement Program Specialist the address you reported. (Do not reference the complaint number given to you by the 311 operator; that number is for your personal records and the 311 database.)
 - Ask the North District Program Specialist for the case number, the investigator's name, and the investigator's contact information.
 - Call the investigator and ask for the status of the investigation. If you are unable to reach the assigned investigator, or if you are not satisfied with the status of the case, contact the North District Area District Manager.
 - Give any additional information that may help Code Enforcement's case (such as the day and time when the violation typically occurs, etc.).
 - Remember that a Code Enforcement completion may take up to 45 days.
 - If a problem recurs after having been corrected, please report it to 311 again.

C23,6
42

Objective Q.4: Guarantee the correct and timely reporting of code violations within the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 12 Provide all NLCNPA residents with information regarding the proper way to report code violations. Refer to the informational box above for this information.

Objective Q.5: Encourage neighbors to report code violations to the Code Compliance Department.

Recommendation 13 Guarantee the anonymity and safety of those neighbors reporting code violations.

Recommendation 14 Encourage area neighborhood associations to adopt a "volunteer policing" policy to notify those citizens violating any code regulations.

❖ **Properties within the NLCNPA should be properly maintained.**

Many code violations in the NLCNPA are oftentimes a result of a sheer lack of oversight to property maintenance; residents or owners may also not effectively maintain their property because they have no necessary means to do so. Whichever the case may be, poorly maintained properties (both residential and commercial) oftentimes misrepresent the neighborhood in which they are located: the absence of proper maintenance translates into a lack of pride in one's property and overall neighborhood. Severely dilapidated areas also fail to attract visitors and future residents. Thus, proper maintenance is needed to provide a sense of place and pride for all citizens within the NLCNPA.



There are varying degrees of property maintenance throughout the NLCNPA. The home on the left is an example of poor property maintenance, while the home on the right exhibits excellent maintenance.

According to neighborhood stakeholders, much of the property maintenance issues occur on properties owned by absentee landlords. Absentee landlords own and rent out their property to tenants in a particular area but do not live in that same area. Because they cannot efficiently or effectively oversee their properties, absentee landlords

C2316
43

oftentimes allow them to fall into disrepair, creating a nuisance or blight within the neighborhood. Similar situations have risen in the NLCNPA in recent years; absentee landlords have failed to ensure proper maintenance on several properties throughout the neighborhood. Effective oversight and maintenance of absentee landlord-owned properties will certainly improve the overall appearance of the NLCNPA.



Property maintenance is lacking of the absentee landlord-owned 4-plexes on Brownie Drive.

Objective Q.6: Improve property maintenance within the NLCNPA.

- Recommendation 15** Support the idea of monthly “best landscaping” competitions for both residential and commercial properties within the NLCNPA.
- Recommendation 16** Sponsor regular recognition of attractive and well-maintained properties throughout the NLCNPA.
- Recommendation 17** Sponsor periodic neighborhood-wide cleanups.
- Recommendation 18** Report all substandard living conditions to the City’s Code Compliance Department via 311.
- Recommendation 19** Access various resources that support property maintenance. These resources include:
- City of Austin’s Neighborhood Support Program
 - Habitat for Humanity’s Habitat ReStore
 - Hands On Housing

Objective Q.7: Ensure proper maintenance on absentee landlord-owned properties throughout the NLCNPA.

- Recommendation 20** Encourage greater investment in those properties owned by absentee landlords.

C2-3,6
44

Affordable Housing

The goal of many citizens is to achieve the proverbial “American Dream” of homeownership. Yet, cities are currently facing a crucial need to provide quality housing at an affordable rate to those citizens earning median or substandard incomes. Affordable neighborhoods are a vital part of any community, housing the workforce that sustains particular portions of that community’s economy.

❖ **The NLCNPA should remain an affordable neighborhood.**

Housing costs have risen considerably in recent years, especially throughout the City of Austin. However, the NLCNPA remains one of only a few affordable neighborhoods within the City. The affordable and quality entry-level housing found throughout the neighborhood is a key factor in attracting new residents (i.e., potential homeowners) to the area while retaining those residents already living within the NLCNPA. However, new housing developments could potentially threaten the affordability of the NLCNPA. Thus, stakeholders expressed the need to preserve the affordability of their neighborhood, especially within any new developments.¹²

What is “Affordable”?

According to the City of Austin’s Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department’s *City of Austin Fiscal Years 2009-14 Consolidated Plan* (p. 3-10), housing affordability is generally defined:

“... in terms of the proportion of household income that is used to pay housing costs. Housing is ‘affordable’ if no more than 30 percent of a household’s monthly income is needed for rent, mortgage payments and utilities. When the proportion of household income needed to pay housing costs exceeds 30 percent, a household is considered ‘cost burdened.’

“Housing costs are also examined in the context of the Median Family Income or MFI. [The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development] divides low- and moderate-income households into categories, based on their relationship to the [MFI]: extremely low-income (earning 30 percent or less of the MFI), very low-income (earning between 31 and 50 percent of the MFI), low-income (earning between 51 and 80 percent of the MFI) and moderate-income (earning between 81 and 95 percent of the MFI). The current [2009] MFI for the Austin area is \$73,300.”

Objective Q.9: Preserve housing affordability throughout the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 21	Encourage coordination between NLCNPA stakeholders and Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department staff to determine the best policies and practices for providing and preserving affordable housing in the neighborhood.
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¹² Specific types of new development are discussed in the Land Use chapter.

C2-316
45

Cultural Diversity

Since 1990, the NLCNPA has become a neighborhood rich in cultural diversity.¹³ The demographic changes can be seen and heard throughout the area: the NLCNPA has become a modern example of the proverbial melting pot, becoming an “immigrant gateway” to people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. As immigrants have made the NLCNPA home in recent years so have businesses that cater to them, with the Chinatown Center being the greatest example. Thus, the NLCNPA has become an interesting and unique place to live, work, or visit with an ever-greater presence of an international community.

❖ **Cultural diversity within the NLCNPA should be acknowledged and welcomed.**

Many concerns addressed in this plan are shared by all NLCNPA residents, which necessitate community-wide cooperation. However, as the neighborhood becomes more diverse, this diversity poses difficult and interesting challenges throughout the area. Stakeholders cited language barriers and a difference of societal norms or traditions as potential threats to the area’s quality of life. The inability to communicate with one another and the lack of knowledge of cultural norms can oftentimes disrupt the characteristics, traditions, and daily operations within the NLCNPA.

Throughout the planning process, stakeholders acknowledged the fact that the NLCNPA has become a diverse neighborhood. There is also a need for long-time residents and businesses to welcome or embrace the area’s somewhat new cultural diversity. Engaging *all* stakeholders within their own neighborhood is a crucial step in creating a quality living environment for all.



The December 1, 2007, March on Rundberg attracted NLCNPA residents of diverse backgrounds (left). The store (at right) on Gessner Drive offers a variety of products and services to the neighborhood’s diverse population.
Photo at left courtesy of the Austin Police Department

Objective Q.10: Acknowledge the cultural diversity of the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 22

Organize and promote neighborhood events with an emphasis on the cultural diversity found throughout the NLCNPA. These events could include:

- A music, arts, or other festival focused upon the area’s cultural influences

¹³ See the Neighborhood in Context Chapter for a broader explanation of the changes the neighborhood has seen in recent decades.

C2-3,6
46

- Cultural awareness workshops

Recommendation 23 Encourage the location of minority-owned and -run businesses within the NLCNPA.

Objective Q.11: Foster greater communication among all area stakeholders.

Recommendation 24 Consider the continuation or expansion of AISD-related language-based adult educational classes in or near the NLCNPA.

Community Health

The health of a neighborhood's residents is of utmost importance to its vitality and integrity. Several variables can factor into the overall health of a neighborhood: the availability of and access to healthy, nutritional food choices; the promotion of healthy behavior; and, the healthy offerings of the neighborhood's environment, including parks and gardens. Once these options are available, however, the responsibility lies in the hands of all citizens to make healthful-minded decisions that will enhance their health and the health of their community. The health of a neighborhood is only as good as that of its citizens. Thus, a healthy population creates a vibrant, lively community.

❖ **The NLCNPA should be a neighborhood of healthy residents.**

Chronic illnesses such as diabetes and obesity have become prevalent in much of eastern and northeastern Travis County (including the NLCNPA) in recent years. See Appendix C for the map provided by the Health and Human Services Department for the affected areas. The adoption of healthier lifestyles could potentially eradicate these illnesses and create a healthier neighborhood. Throughout the planning process, stakeholders expressed great interest in a variety of activities that could reduce the occurrence of chronic disease and enhance the health of the NLCNPA, including recreational activities and healthier eating habits.

Several resources are identified in the objectives and recommendations below; to find their contact information, refer to Appendix D.

Objective Q.12: Promote healthy behaviors among NLCNPA residents.

Recommendation 25 Create a neighborhood walking group.

Recommendation 26 Partner with the Parks and Recreation Department to create organized sports leagues for area residents.

Recommendation 27 Explore additional opportunities for recreation in the NLCNPA.

C2-3,6
47

Recommendation 28 Encourage attendance of the Happy Kitchen/La Cocina Alegre cooking classes as provided by the Sustainable Food Center.

Objective Q.13: Promote a healthy environment within the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 29 Create and maintain a community garden, taking into consideration the following steps:

- Identify interested citizens or neighborhood representatives.
- Locate an appropriate plat of land to place the community garden upon.
- Obtain funding from various sources.
- Consult various agencies for technical assistance regarding community gardening construction, maintenance, and education. These agencies include:
 - Sustainable Food Center
 - Keep Austin Beautiful
 - Austin Parks Foundation

A detailed list of actions needed to create a community garden on City property can be found in Appendix E.



There are examples of community gardening throughout the NLCNPA. The beginnings of a community garden are located on a vacant lot near the dead-end of East Lola Drive (left) and community gardening has become a popular activity at the Santo Maria Village apartment complex.

Photo at right courtesy of Lisa Healy

Objective Q.14: Improve the availability of healthy and nutritional food options throughout the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 30 Encourage mobile food vendors throughout the NLCNPA to offer healthy food choices.

Recommendation 31 Limit the construction of new fast food restaurants throughout the NLCNPA.

C2-3.6
48

Recommendation 32 Encourage local grocery stores to offer a healthier variety of food options for their customers.

Recommendation 33 Examine the feasibility and support for a local farmers' market.

Sustainability

Sustainability refers to the ability to "[meet] the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."¹⁴ Within recent years, rising transportation costs and an increased awareness of our impact on the earth have fostered an understanding that living a more sustainable lifestyle can secure a viable environment in the future. Human actions today will have a global impact tomorrow; we must realize that our current habits will affect future generations.

❖ **The NLCNPA should become a sustainable community.**

Our current (non-sustainable) habits will have a global impact with related, localized consequences; as such, the NLCNPA will not be exempt from the incurred consequences of our current impacts on the environment. Throughout the planning process, however, stakeholders developed several sustainability-related recommendations, keeping their community's future in mind. These recommendations include a variety of programs, rebates, and subsidized items available from the City of Austin to help aid those interested in living a more sustainable lifestyle. Other sustainability-related recommendations (e.g., alternate forms of transportation, trees, etc.) can be found throughout this plan.



The residents of a home on Elliott Street have already adopted a more sustainable lifestyle with the use of solar panels.

Objective Q.15: Promote sustainability throughout the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 34 Participate in the Watershed Protection Department's Green Neighbor program.

Recommendation 35 Encourage residential and commercial participation in several energy efficiency programs sponsored by Austin Energy. These programs include:

- Green Building
- Power Saver
- Commercial Power Saver

¹⁴ As defined by the 1987 United Nations Brundtland Commission. Found in: Porter, Douglas R. "A Brief Introduction to Sustainable Development." The Practice of Sustainable Development. Ed. Douglas R. Porter. Washington: Urban Land Institute, 2000. 1-3.

C-2-3,6
49

- Solar for Schools
- Energy Efficiency Rebate programs

Recommendation 36 Encourage participation in all City of Austin recycling programs.

Recommendation 37 Actively enforce watering restrictions throughout the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 38 Encourage the planting of hardy, native trees and plants that require less water.

A list of sustainability resources and programs available in the City of Austin is available in Appendix F.

DRAFT

PARKS and TREES

C2-3,6
50

Achieve and maintain healthy, sustainable, functional, quality, safe and aesthetically-beautiful parks and green spaces that provide opportunities for cultural interactions within the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area.

Parks

Parks are the cornerstones of a city's neighborhoods; they foster a sense of community by offering the opportunity to congregate, interact, and recreate with one another. Parks can also provide healthy and natural alternatives to their surrounding built environments.

With only two parks within its boundaries, the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area (NLCNPA) is underserved; of the approximately 1,297 acres of the NLCNPA, only 0.67 percent (8.67 acres) are City parks. These two parks do not meet the current and future needs of the community as its population continues to grow.

❖ **The existing parks of the NLCNPA should better serve the community.**

The two existing parks in the NLCNPA, Barrington Park and Brownie Playground, should be improved in both their functionality and safety. See the *Area Parks* map on page 39 for the location of these parks within the NLCNPA.

Barrington Park is an approximately 8.35 acre, shared park facility with the Austin Independent School District (AISD) located at Barrington Elementary School. Current facilities at Barrington Park include a playground area, multi-purpose field, covered basketball court, dirt track, and several fitness machines. The park's facilities truly make it a public gathering place, utilized by schoolchildren, neighborhood residents, and area sports leagues.



Barrington Park offers its patrons a playground area (left) and a multi-purpose field for various recreational activities (right).

At approximately 0.32 acres, the Brownie Playground is a modest park containing a small playscape and picnic area. Located at the southern terminus of Brownie Drive, the playground is not easily accessible from many parts of the NLCNPA. In fact, the

C2-3,4
151



North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area Area Parks

C2-3,6
52

immediate neighborhood near the playground is perceived as being neither inviting nor safe for visitors; thus, the playground is used most by those families living within close proximity.



Brownie Playground's playscape and picnic area provide recreational opportunities to area residents.

Objective P.1: Improve Barrington Park facilities.

- Recommendation 39** Install additional drinking fountains at Barrington Park.
- Recommendation 40** Provide continual clearance of trash and debris found on the Barrington Park grounds.
- Recommendation 41** Develop a maintenance strategy to improve the quality of the park's multi-purpose field.

Objective P.2: Improve the access to and safety of Brownie Playground.

- Recommendation 42** Investigate ways to improve access to Brownie Playground.
- Recommendation 43** Examine strategies that will promote wider usage of the Brownie Playground. Such strategies could include:
- Improved lighting
 - The placement of emergency call boxes
- Recommendation 44** Encourage increased police patrols by the Austin Police Department at or near Brownie Playground.

C23,6
53

❖ **Future parks should meet the needs of those living within the NLCNPA.**

The NLCNPA does not have a local-serving, neighborhood park that would allow its residents opportunity to recreate, gather, and interact. The NLCNPA also lacks a sufficient amount of City-owned land where a future City-run park could be located; refer to the *Area Parks and COA-Owned Land* map on page 42 for the location of these parcels. However, concurrent with the planning process, the Parks and Recreation Department (PAR) was actively seeking land within the NLCNPA to provide another park in the immediate area. For a list of criteria PAR uses in determining the location and placement of future parks, refer to the Criteria for Parkland Acquisition informational box below.


If a new park is developed, it will be a local asset for the NLCNPA community and its diverse population. Neighborhood stakeholders explicitly stated their desire to incorporate amenities that would address the area's cultural diversity, climate change initiatives, and the overall health of their neighborhood. Stakeholders felt the new park should have a limited service area, serving only the NLCNPA and its immediate surroundings. They were concerned that a larger-scaled park would not foster a sense of community; consequently, they decided to limit the type and number of amenities that support large-group activities (e.g., baseball and softball fields, basketball courts) at a new neighborhood park.

Criteria for Parkland Acquisition

The Parks and Recreation Department (PAR) uses a gap analysis to identify areas throughout the City of Austin that are deficient of public parkland. According to PAR officials, in 2008, NLCNPA residents lacked adequate access to neighborhood parks and, therefore, PAR was actively seeking opportunities to provide a park within the area.

When analyzing land for future acquisition, PAR uses the following criteria:

- Current deficiency of parkland within the area
- Size of the land
- Road frontage
- Developable ability
- Present natural features
- Accessibility
- Connectivity
- Leverage opportunities with developers or the public
- Present cultural features



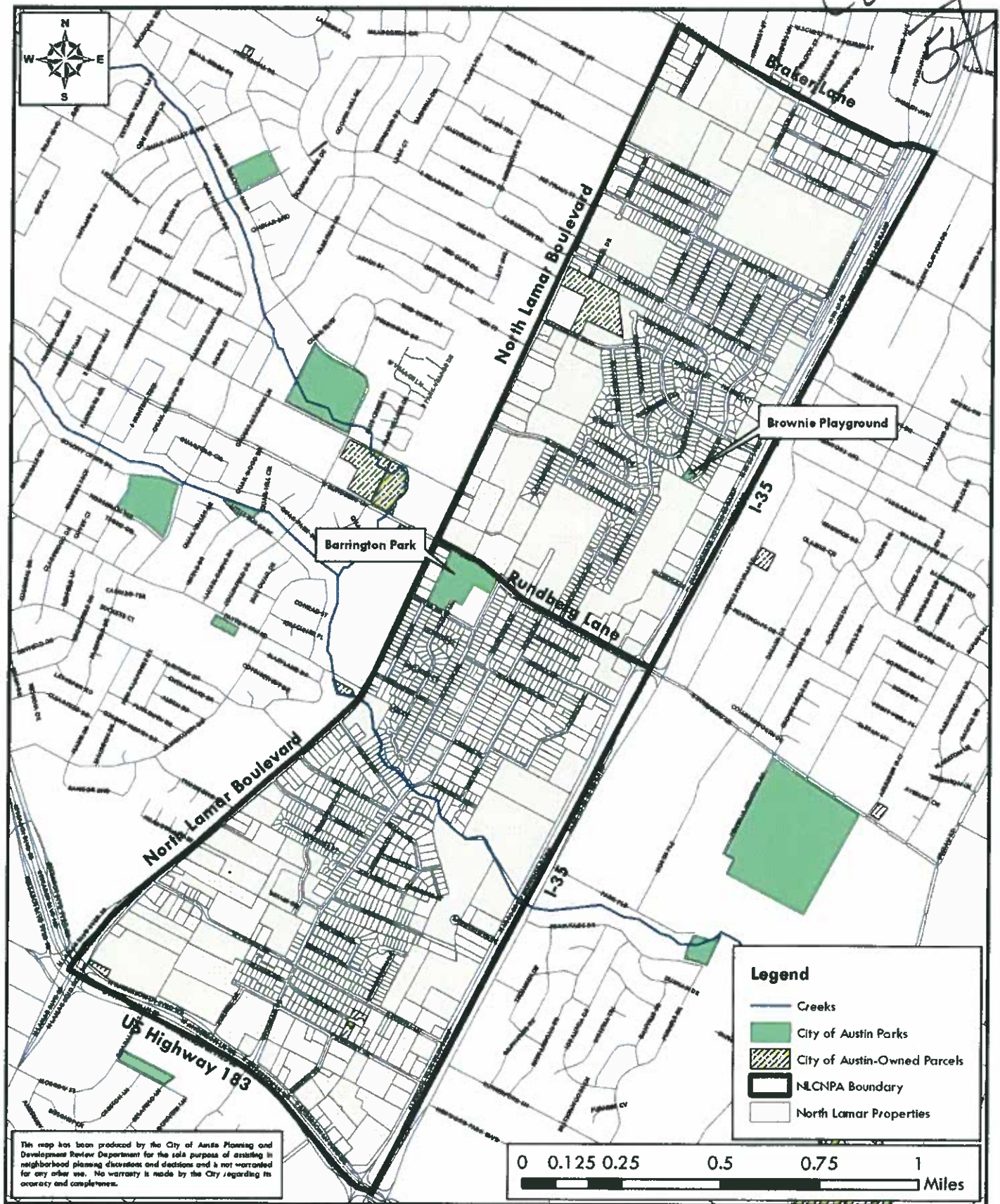
For more information, refer to PAR's "Long Range Plan for Land and Facilities" at:
<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/parks/history.htm>.

Objective P.3: A new park should be located within the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 45 Find and allocate land for a new park within the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 46 Examine opportunities for a public-private partnership to develop and manage community recreational facilities, including a new park, within the NLCNPA.

C2-3.1
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North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area

Area Parks and City of Austin-Owned Land

Objective P.4: The new park should become a neighborhood asset to the NLCNPA.

C23,4
55

Recommendation 47 Consider the incorporation of the following amenities within the design of a new park:

- 47.A. Drinking fountains for both people and dogs
- 47.B. Interactive water fountain
- 47.C. Benches
- 47.D. Picnic tables
- 47.E. A pavilion and/or an area that can be reserved for various functions
- 47.F. Bar-B-Que pits and/or grills
- 47.G. Trash cans
- 47.H. "Mutt Mitt" stations with bags and receptacles for pet waste
- 47.I. Playground equipment
- 47.J. Walking trails
- 47.K. Exercise equipment similar to that found at Barrington Park
- 47.L. An area for a community garden
- 47.M. Large open space to allow for various activities, including football and kite-flying

Objective P.5: The new park should directly serve the NLCNPA community and its surrounding neighborhoods.

Recommendation 48 Examine the feasibility to limit the number of amenities within the new park so as not to attract large groups of people from outside the neighborhood.



A new neighborhood park should have a gazebo (left) and playscapes made from recycled materials (right).

Photo at left courtesy of
<http://www.banff.ca/local-residents/recreation/facilities/central-park.htm>

Photo at right courtesy of
<http://www.learningstructures.com/>

Objective P.6: The new park should address the cultural diversity present within the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 49 Incorporate into the park's design a gazebo or other performance-type venue that will allow for a variety of

C2-3,6
56

culturally-related performances, including music and dance.

Objective P.7: *The design for a new park should include facilities that promote the safety, convenience, and comfort of its users.*

- Recommendation 50** Provide restroom facilities for park users.
- Recommendation 51** Provide adequate parking for park visitors.
- Recommendation 52** Investigate safety measures that will protect all park visitors. These measures could include:
- Emergency call boxes
 - Lighting
- Recommendation 53** Encourage Austin Police Department security patrols at or near the new park.

Objective P.8: *The design for a new park should include facilities and amenities that promote sustainability and climate protection.*

- Recommendation 54** Incorporate renewable energy sources into the design of the park's facilities. These sources could include:
- Rooftop wind turbines
 - Solar paneling
 - Electric car plug-in sites
- Recommendation 55** Use recycled and/or recyclable materials in the construction of the parks' facilities and amenities.



The landscaping of the area's new park should resemble that of the Cherrywood Green in east Austin with its native, low-growing plant species.

Objective P.9: *The new park's landscaping should provide function and safety to all visitors.*

- Recommendation 56** Place landscaping in areas where it will not interfere with activities that occur on the park's open spaces.

C2-3,6
57

Recommendation 57 Plant those tree species that will, upon maturation, enhance the tree canopy of the new park. These species include:

- Pecan
- Live Oak
- Chinquapin Oak
- Bur Oak
- Cedar Elm

Recommendation 58 Plant low-growing, native shrubbery and/or greenery that promote natural surveillance¹⁵ among visitors of the new park. Certain species could include:

- Prickly pear cactus
- Yucca
- Agarita
- Naturalized rose species
- Other similar plant types

Recommendation 59 Provide regular maintenance of the park's landscaping.

Trees

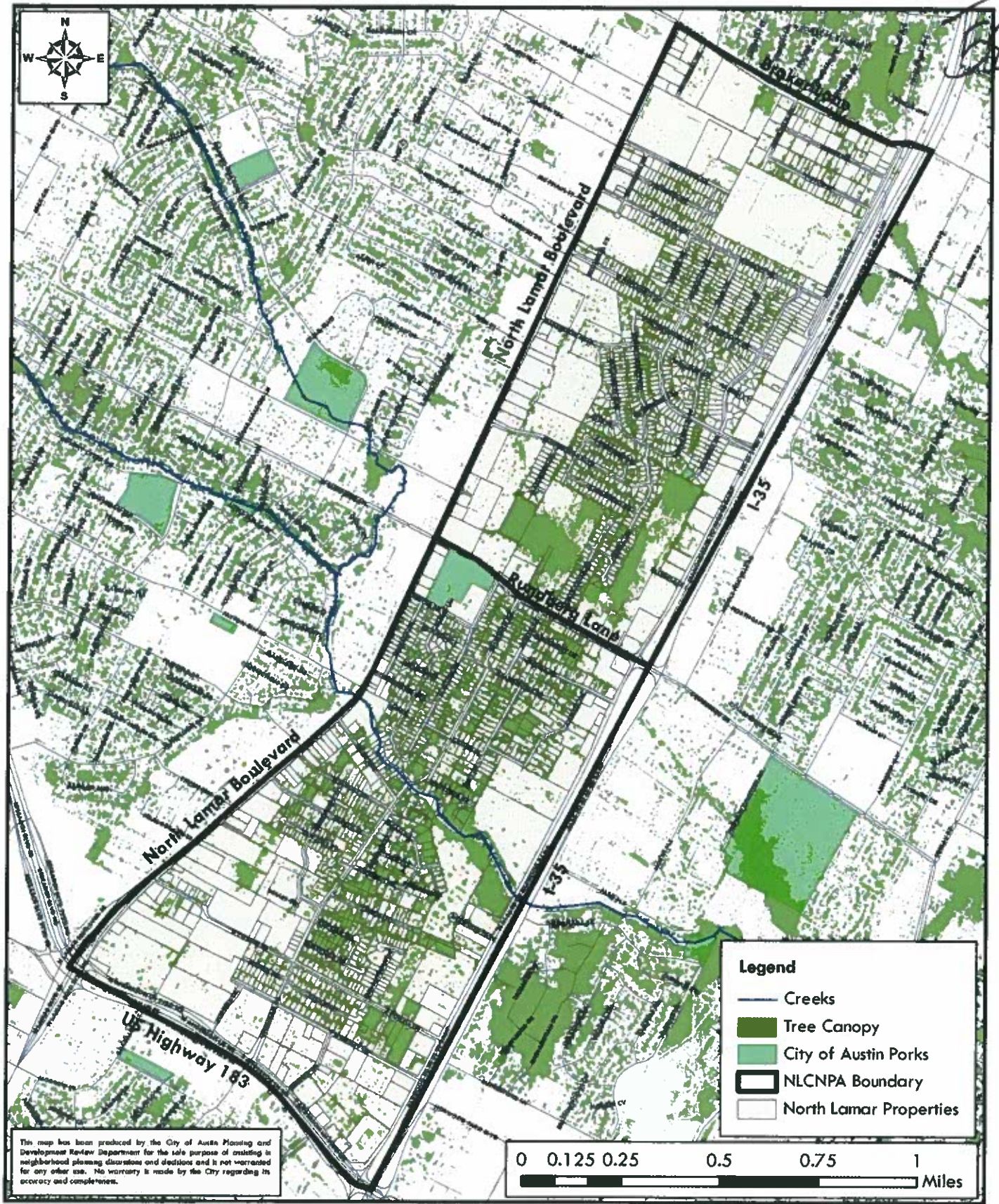
Trees are an asset to any neighborhood, providing economic, aesthetic, and environmental value. Areas with trees are generally more desirable and potentially more valuable than those without. Trees also improve the surrounding environment by absorbing carbon dioxide and other air pollutants, mitigating storm-water runoff, and acting as a passive heating and cooling mechanism for area homes and businesses.



Large trees at homes on Georgian Drive (left) and Red Oak Circle (right) enhance the aesthetic quality of the NLCNPA

¹⁵ Refer to the *What is Crime Prevention through Environmental Design?* informational box on page 28 for a definition of "natural surveillance."

C2-3.6
ES



North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area Tree Canopy (2006)

C2-3,6
59

❖ **The tree canopy should become a beneficial asset to the NLCNPA.**

The NLCNPA lacks an adequate tree canopy.¹⁶ Only 21 percent of the combined neighborhood was covered by tree canopy in 2008; the *Tree Canopy (2006)* map on page 46 displays the tree canopy for the area.

According to the *Tree Canopy (2006)* map, the majority of the NLCNPA's tree canopy is located in the interior, residential portions of the area. Many of the area's commercial and multi-family properties located along North Lamar Boulevard, I-35 and US Highway 183 are largely devoid of trees. Stakeholders expressed a desire to enhance the tree canopy in certain areas of the neighborhood, particularly along the aforementioned roadways, in order to beautify and improve the neighborhood.



Stakeholders expressed the need for tree plantings along major thoroughfares that are largely devoid of trees, including North Lamar Boulevard.

Objective P.10: Enhance the tree canopy of the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 60

Plant hardy, long-lasting, and drought-tolerant trees throughout the NLCNPA. Specific areas include:

- 60.A. North Lamar Boulevard, between Braker Lane and US Highway 183
- 60.B. I-35, between Braker Lane and Barwood Park
- 60.C. Rundberg Lane, between North Lamar Boulevard and IH-35
- 60.D. The Chinatown Center and the adjacent property to its east
- 60.E. The Crockett Center
- 60.F. The commercial and multi-family properties located along I-35, between Showplace Lane and Little Walnut Creek
- 60.G. The residential area bounded by Diamondback Trail to the north, Doc Holliday Trail to the

¹⁶ "Tree canopy" here refers to the overall coverage of a particular area by trees.

C2-3,6
60

east, East Garrett Run to the south, and
Derringer Trail to the west

Refer to the *Tree Planting and Preservation Recommendations* map on page 49 for the locations of these specific areas.

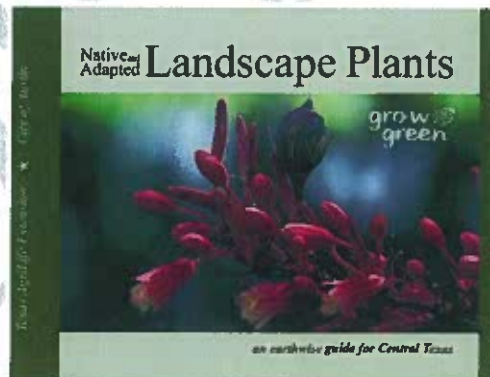
Recommendation 61 Plant native species of trees throughout the NLCNPA, including:

- Monterey Oak
- Pecan
- Texas Persimmon
- Texas Redbud
- Texas Ash

Recommendation 62 Plant other species of trees throughout the NLCNPA, including:

- Mountain Laurel
- Grape Myrtle
- Eastern Red Cedar
- Silver Leaf Maple
- Wax Myrtle

Recommendation 63 Encourage the use of the *Native and Adapted Landscape Plants* guidebook so to choose naturalized and proper tree species for the area.

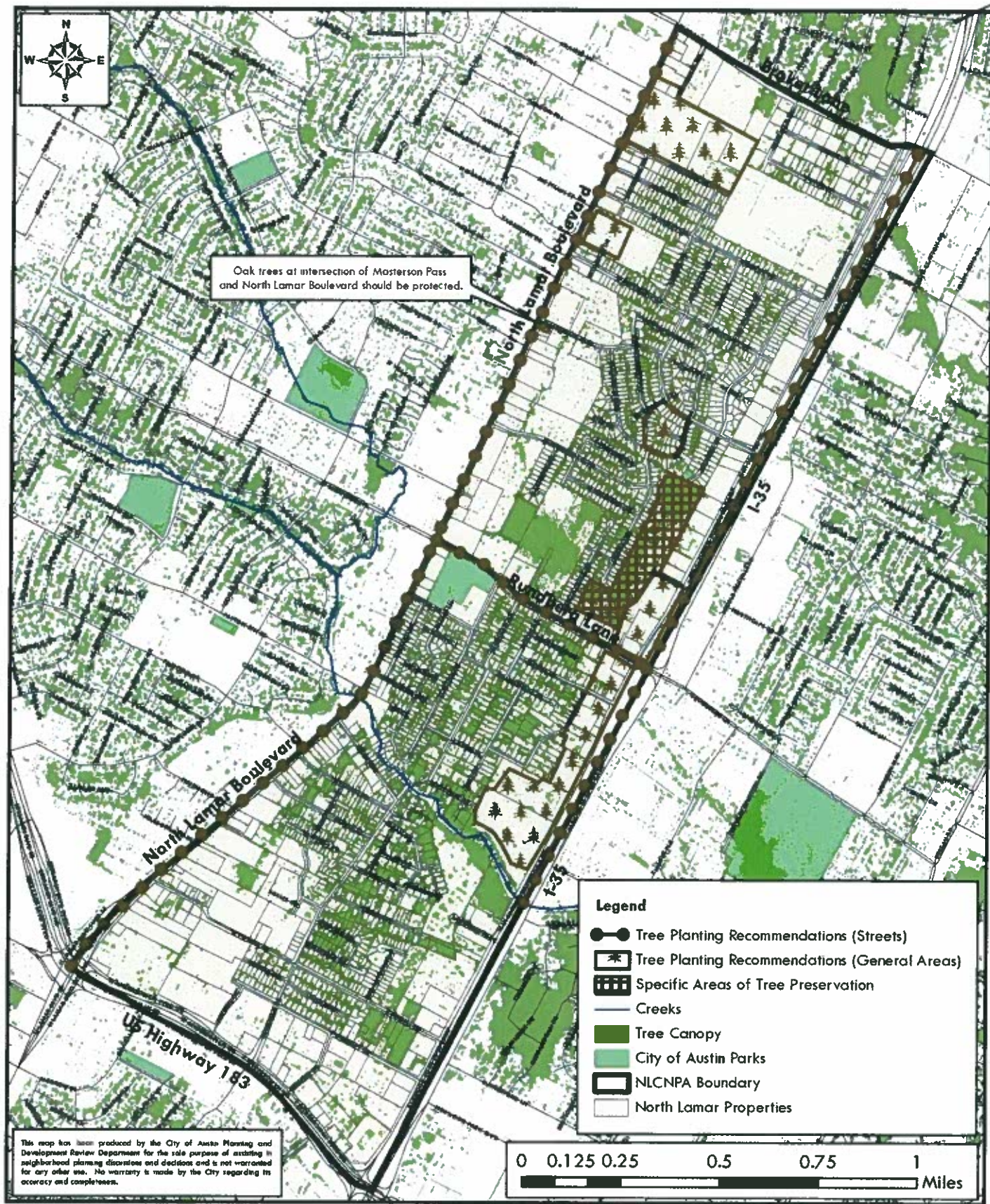


To choose naturalized plant species for landscaping, stakeholders should use the *Native and Adapted Landscape Plants* guidebook provided by the City of Austin.

❖ **The NLCNPA tree canopy should become a protected asset for the community.**

Not only should the existing tree canopy of the NLCNPA be enhanced, it should also be preserved and protected. Due to the current deficiency of trees, it is important to protect those trees already present throughout the NLCNPA.

C2-3,6
61



North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area

Tree Planting and Preservation Recommendations

C23.6
62

Neighborhood stakeholders expressed specific concerns regarding illegal parking and the restriction to tree growth it poses. Trees throughout the NLCNPA are gravely impacted by the improper parking of vehicles on residents' front lawns. Over time, these vehicles could potentially compact and destroy trees' root systems or leak harmful materials into the soil, further restricting tree growth in the area.

Objective P.11: Protect the existing tree canopy of the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 64 Encourage the preservation of those trees already present throughout the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 65 Protect specific areas of trees, paying special attention to:

65.A. The oak trees located on the median at the intersection of North Lamar Boulevard and Masterson Pass

65.B. Those trees located on the vacant properties located between North Creek and Oriole Drives, Brownie Drive, IH-35, and Rundberg Lane

Refer to the *Tree Planting and Preservation Recommendations* map on page 49 for the location of these specific areas.



Trees throughout the NLCNPA should be protected assets of the community. The oak trees at the intersection of Masterson Pass and North Lamar Boulevard (left) and trees along residential streets (Glenn Lane, right) should be protected.

Recommendation 66 Discourage parking on front or side lawns upon which trees are present.

❖ **Tree education should be offered to every NLCNPA stakeholder.**

In order to both enhance and protect the tree canopy of the NLCNPA, education regarding tree (and other landscaping) care must be made available to all neighborhood stakeholders. This education will increase awareness to those activities affecting the

C23,6
63

area's trees: illegal parking, improper care, development, or the planting of invasive species. By correcting these issues through education, trees will become a beneficial and valuable asset to the NLCNPA community.

Several City-sponsored or -related programs, including Austin Community Trees (ACT), are valuable resources for information regarding trees. In fact, through an application process, the ACT program supplies trees to one neighborhood planning area (with an adopted neighborhood plan *and* low tree canopy percentage) each year.

Objective P.12: Provide tree education to all stakeholders of the NLCNPA.

- Recommendation 67** Provide tree education to all stakeholders of the NLCNPA including information regarding:
- Proper irrigation and care needed to sustain tree growth
 - Illegal (i.e., front yard) parking and its effects on trees and their critical root zones
 - Tree species that will provide large canopies
 - Native or adapted tree species
 - Types of fertilizers that pose little harm to the natural environment

- Recommendation 68** Distribute educational materials regarding proper tree care in the following manners:
- Public Service Announcements
 - Brochures
 - Leaflet insert in monthly Austin Energy bills

Objective P.13: Encourage the use of the tree-related resources available throughout the City.

- Recommendation 69** Participate in the Austin Community Trees tree planting program.

C23,6
64

TRANSPORTATION

Pedestrians, motorists, transit users, bicyclists, and mobility-impaired neighbors should be able to safely and efficiently travel throughout the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area and to the rest of the City.

A network of roadways, sidewalks, and bike routes connects the neighborhoods of the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area (NLCNPA) to each other and to the City of Austin. However, a lack of improvements made to this network has reduced the mobility of motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians.¹⁷

During the planning process, a number of transportation-related concerns were identified in the initial survey and at several neighborhood meetings.

❖ **The pedestrian and bicycle transportation networks should be improved.**

To efficiently and safely move within, out of, and through the NLCNPA, pedestrians and bicyclists need an interconnected and complete network of sidewalks and bicycle lanes. The lack of a complete sidewalk network impedes pedestrians' efficient access to specific areas within the NLCNPA, including the commercial areas located along North Lamar Boulevard; this is especially so within the Georgian Acres planning area. Also, the current bicycle infrastructure (including bicycle lanes, routes, and signage) within the NLCNPA does not promote increased usage. However, an improved, connected pedestrian and bicycle network in place will provide people with transportation options other than the automobile.

Objective T.1: Improve sidewalk connections throughout the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 70 Construct new sidewalks along:

- 70.A. the south side of Applegate Drive, between North Lamar Boulevard and Brownie Drive
- 70.B. North Lamar Boulevard (several locations)
- 70.C. the west side of Brownie Drive, between West Applegate Drive and East Grady Drive
- 70.D. the north side of West Grady Drive, between North Lamar Boulevard and Georgian Drive
- 70.E. the entire north side of Powell Lane
- 70.F. the south side of East Lola Drive
- 70.G. the entire north side of Deen Avenue
- 70.H. the entire north side of Carpenter Avenue

¹⁷ Throughout this chapter, the term "pedestrian" includes those with mobility impairments or handicaps.

C2-3,6
63



This map has been produced by the City of Austin Planning and Development Review Department for the sole purpose of assisting in neighborhood planning discussions and decisions and is not warranted for any other use. No warranty is made by the City regarding its accuracy and completeness.

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles



North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area

Sidewalk Recommendations

C23,6
66

- 70.I. the south side of Diamondback Trail between Brownie Drive and the I-35 frontage road
- 70.J. either side of Turner Drive, between West Grady Drive and West Applegate Drive
- 70.K. either side of Georgian Drive, between Grady Drive and West Applegate Drive
- 70.L. either side of Jean Drive, between East Grady Drive and West Applegate Drive
- 70.M. either side of McMillan Drive, between East Grady Drive and West Applegate Drive
- 70.N. the south side of East Wonsley Drive, between Georgian Drive and the I-35 frontage road
- 70.O. the south side of Middle Lane, between North Drive and Capitol Drive

Refer to the *Sidewalk Recommendations* map on page 52.



Several main thoroughfares in the NLCNPA lack an improved sidewalk network. Areas near North Lamar Boulevard at Braker Lane (left) and Georgian Drive at Powell Lane (right) are examples of needed sidewalk construction or repair.

Recommendation 71

Repair or improve sidewalks along:

- 71.A. Georgian Drive, between US Highway 183 and Rundberg Lane
- 71.B. Oriole Drive
- 71.C. Slayton Drive

Recommendation 72

Explore the possibility of constructing a sidewalk or paved path from Ferguson Drive to Little Walnut Creek Elementary School to provide a safe route to school for students.

C2-3,6
67

Objective T.2: Improve bicycle connections within, into, and through the neighborhoods of the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 73 Consider establishing bike lanes on Rundberg Lane to connect the NLCNPA to other areas of the City via Bicycle Route #14.¹⁸

Recommendation 74 Place signs along the existing bicycle routes to promote awareness to their existence and the possible presence of bicyclists.

Refer to the *Area Bicycle Routes* map on page 56.



Bicycle lanes are present throughout the NLCNPA. Route 47 (above) runs along Georgian Drive, south of Rundberg Lane.

Objective T.3: Improve access to the NLCNPA pedestrian transportation network.

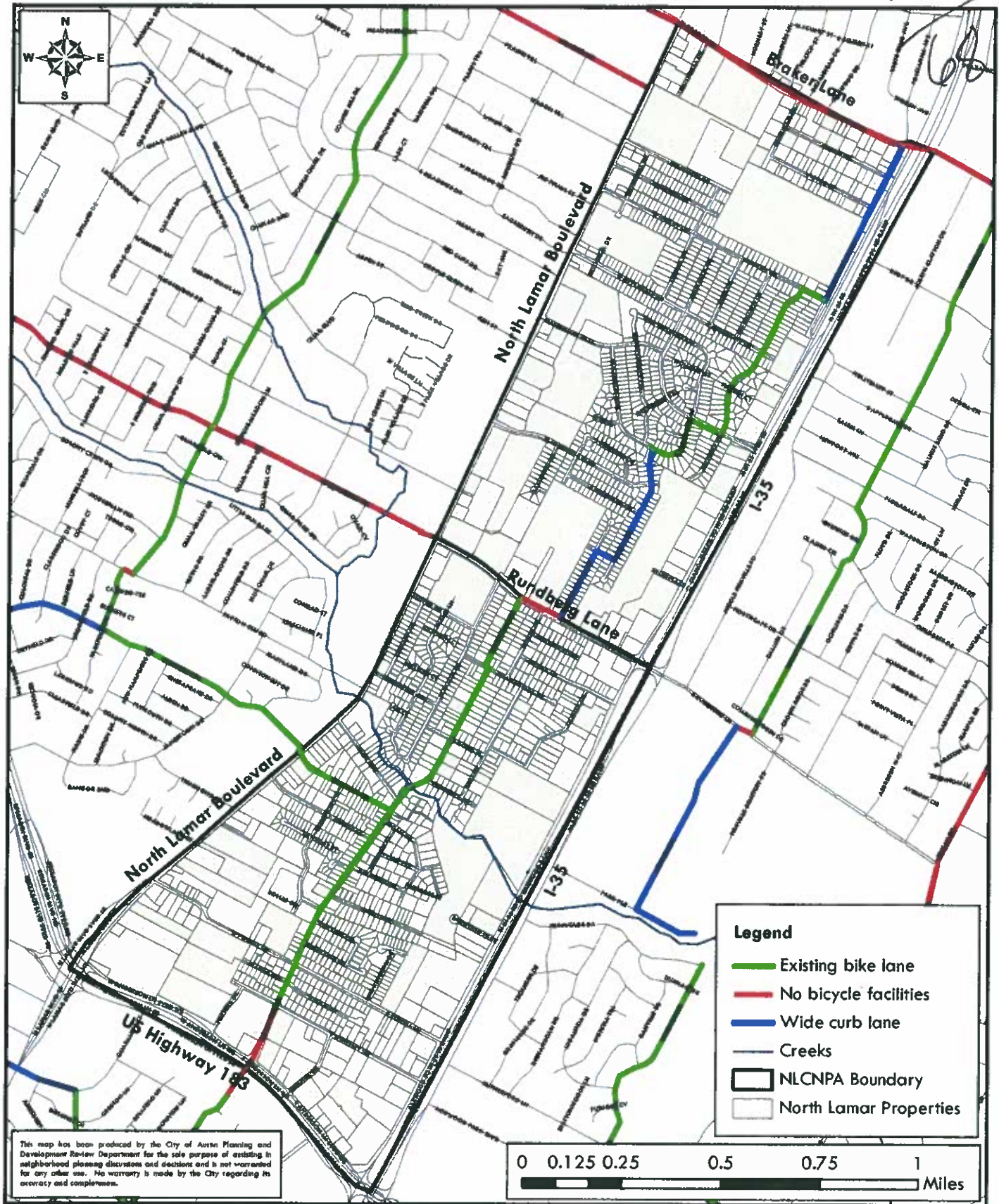
Recommendation 75 Construct Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant ramps at all intersections with sidewalks.

Objective T.4: Enhance the aesthetic quality of the NLCNPA pedestrian transportation network.

Recommendation 76 Add trees, shrubbery, and other greenery along sidewalks and other pedestrian pathways.

¹⁸ Be advised that specific bicycle route numbers may change after the adoption of this plan.

C2-3.6



North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area

Area Bicycle Routes

C2-3.6
69

Recommendation 77 Investigate the possibility of adding brick pavers, stamped concrete, or other decorative materials to sidewalks at significant intersections.

Recommendation 78 Where appropriate, place benches and/or shelters at Capital Metro bus stops throughout the NLCNPA.



Trees, streetlights, a sheltered bus stop, and decorative concrete add aesthetic value to the sidewalk along East 11th Street.

❖ **The safety of both pedestrians and motorists needs to be upheld and ensured.**

The NLCNPA is bounded by four major traffic corridors: North Lamar Boulevard, I-35, Braker Lane, and US Highway 183. Several neighborhood streets serve as cut-through routes, connecting these corridors to one another. These routes include Grady Drive, Masterson Pass/Diamondback Trail, Powell Lane, Beaver Street, and Georgian Drive (between US Highway 183 and Rundberg Lane). The accessibility and convenience of the major corridors has led to an increase in vehicular traffic and speed along the streets *within* the planning area, compromising the safety of those traveling throughout the NLCNPA.

Objective T.5: *The streets within the NLCNPA should be safer for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.*

Recommendation 79 Conduct a traffic-calming study to determine possible design changes to the NLCNPA street network to facilitate traffic flow and reduce hazards throughout the neighborhood. If warranted, implement the recommendation(s) from the traffic-calming study. Special emphasis should be placed on the following thoroughfares:

- Grady Drive
- Masterson Pass-Diamondback Trail
- Powell Lane
- Georgian Drive, between US Highway 183 and Rundberg Lane
- East Drive
- Beaver Street

C2.3,6
70



Residents on Grady Drive have reported many traffic-related issues for this residential street in the NLCNPA. Its width and lack of lane striping create hazardous traveling conditions.

Recommendation 80

Communicate with the Austin Police Department regarding the enforcement of traffic regulations throughout the NLCNPA. These traffic regulations include:

- Speeding
- “No Through Trucks,” especially along Grady Drive
- Jaywalking

Recommendation 81

Consider reducing speed limits from 30 mph to 25 mph on appropriate neighborhood residential streets.

Recommendation 82

Identify intersections where stop signs may be appropriate, including:

- 82.A. Beaver Street at Guadalupe Street
- 82.B. Masterson Pass-Diamondback Trail at Doc Holliday Trail

Recommendation 83

To ensure appropriate driving conditions throughout the NLCNPA, consider adding lane striping to the following streets:

- 83.A. Brownie Drive
- 83.B. Masterson Pass-Diamondback Trail
- 83.C. Grady Drive

C2-3.6
74

❖ **North Lamar Boulevard should be a safe route for both pedestrians and bicyclists.**

North Lamar Boulevard is a primary north-south route through Austin. Serving as the NLCNPA's western boundary, it is a wide five-lane roadway characterized by an almost continuous line of commercial establishments including the HEB, Chinatown, and Crockett shopping centers. Curb cuts dot the entire thoroughfare, increasing the number of access points to and from all of these establishments. The curb cuts, intense commercial uses, and high volume of vehicular and pedestrian traffic can create hazardous transit conditions for those traveling along North Lamar Boulevard. Long distances between signalized intersections (i.e., those with stoplights) further contribute to a transportation corridor suited to vehicular traffic and little else. All of these factors have contributed to a number of automobile collisions with both pedestrians and bicyclists along this route in recent years. Refer to the *Motor Vehicle Collisions with Pedestrians, 2003 - 2008*, map on page 60.

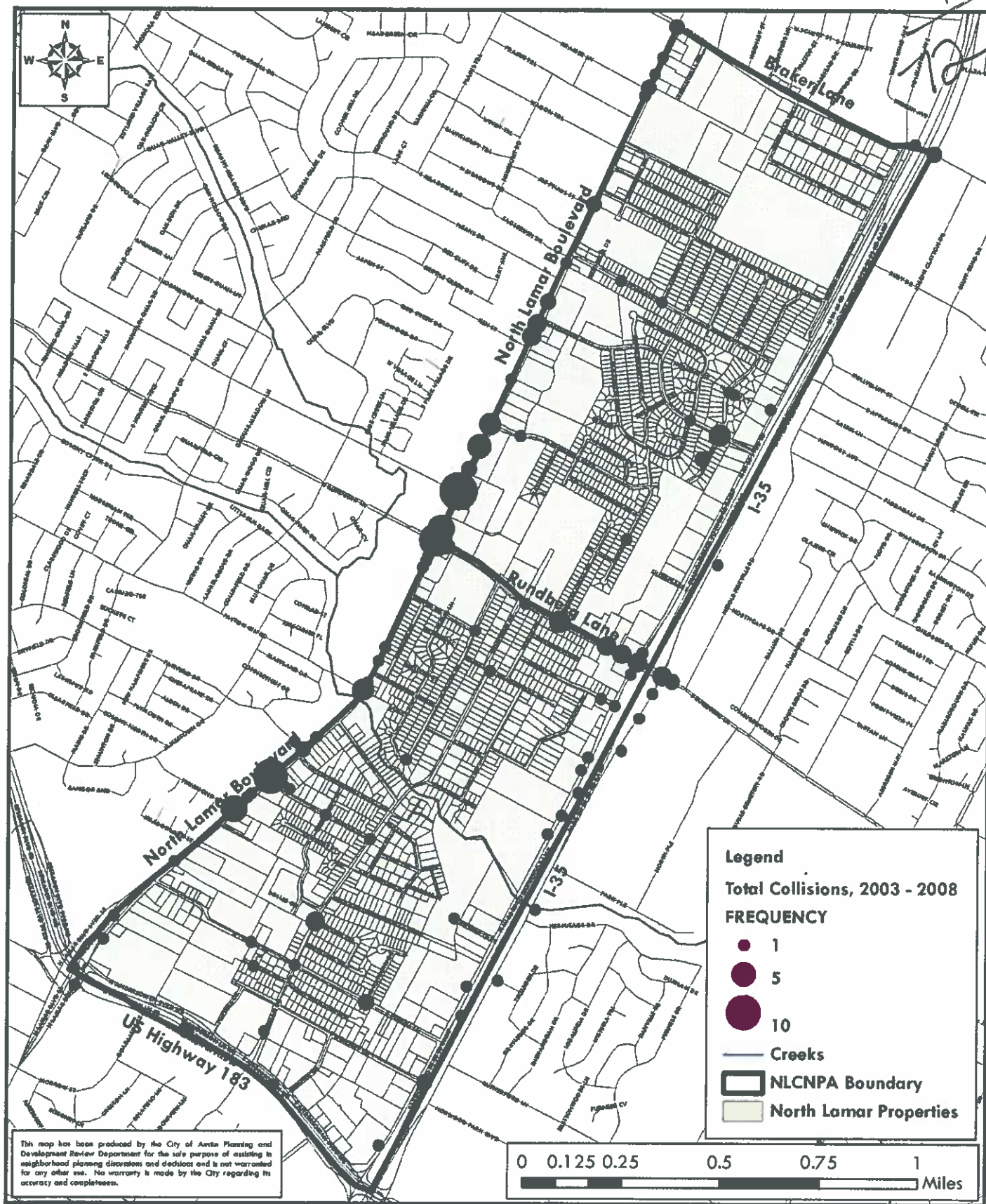


North Lamar Boulevard is a wide, highly traveled roadway with numerous commercial establishments and curb cuts along the western length of the NLCNPA (right side of picture).

Objective T.6: Improve the safety of pedestrians traveling along North Lamar Boulevard.

- Recommendation 84** Consider reducing speed limits along North Lamar Boulevard.
- Recommendation 85** Study the feasibility of placing signalized, mid-block crosswalks along North Lamar Boulevard.
- Recommendation 86** Study the feasibility of constructing pedestrian refuge islands, such as raised medians, along North Lamar Boulevard.

C2-3,6
12



North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area

Total Motor Vehicle Collisions with Pedestrians, 2003 - 2008

C2-3,6
73

Recommendation 87 Develop a plan and implementation strategies that reduce the number of curb cuts along North Lamar Boulevard.

Recommendation 88 Study the feasibility of providing reusable, reflective vests and/or flags for pedestrians at various crosswalks along North Lamar Boulevard.



The construction of pedestrian refuge islands (shown on left) can lessen the amount of collisions between pedestrians and motor vehicles at or near dangerous pedestrian crossings along North Lamar Boulevard (right).
Photo at left courtesy of <http://www.bvalink.com/itsmtrk/pedestrian-refuge-island>

Objective T.7: Improve education and outreach to residents regarding the correct places and times to cross streets, including North Lamar Boulevard.

Recommendation 89 Develop various educational tools and materials in English, Spanish, and other languages that promote pedestrian safety. These tools could include:

- Pamphlets
- Signs
- Public service announcements

Recommendation 90 Distribute educational materials throughout the NLCNPA to residents, business-owners, and schoolchildren.

Recommendation 91 Add small signs at signalized crosswalks with a universal symbol meaning "Stop Here." This symbol should be recognizable and understood without any language barriers.

❖ **Traffic flow along North Lamar Boulevard should be improved.**

A main commercial thoroughfare for many north Austin neighborhoods, North Lamar Boulevard is highly trafficked by all modes of transportation: personal and commercial vehicles, mass transit (i.e., buses), and pedestrians. Several disruptions have impeded motorists' travel along this increasingly busy roadway. In addition to the high volume of pedestrian usage, efficient travel along North Lamar Boulevard has been affected by lane

C2-396
74

blockages at or near bus stops by Capital Metro buses and by the poor design of the roadway, especially at and near its interchange with US Highway 183. As these disruptions are minimized, traffic flow should be maintained at a proper level so to ensure the safety of all users of North Lamar Boulevard.



A "Right Turn Only" lane could alleviate traffic at the intersection of North Lamar Boulevard at Rundberg Lane.

Objective T.8: Improve traffic flow along North Lamar Boulevard.

Recommendation 92 Investigate different methods to ease or improve the flow of bus traffic along North Lamar Boulevard. These methods could include:

- Dedicated bus pullout or turnout lanes
- Bus bulbs

Recommendation 93 Consider the placement of "Right Turn Only" lanes at major intersections along North Lamar Boulevard.

Recommendation 94 Investigate and implement design alternatives to the interchange of North Lamar Boulevard and US Highway 183.

Recommendation 95 Investigate and implement design alternatives to the intersection near North Lamar Boulevard and Powell Lane, including the northbound merge lane from the US Highway 183 frontage road.

Recommendation 96 Determine the feasibility of synchronizing traffic signals along North Lamar Boulevard.



The interchange near North Lamar Boulevard and US Highway 183 is dangerous for both drivers and pedestrians.

C2-3,6
75

❖ **Travel within the neighborhoods shall be efficient and free of physical barriers.**

Barriers prevent efficient and safe pedestrian and motor vehicle travel throughout the NLCNPA. Along several streets, vehicles are illegally or improperly parked, limiting access to neighborhood streets and sidewalks. In other locations, especially along several narrow streets, travel is obstructed by *legally* parked cars. In both instances, parked vehicles limit motorized and pedestrian travel throughout the planning area and, on occasion, these vehicles also block access to fire hydrants and public rights of way.

Objective T.9: Implement and enforce front yard parking regulations throughout the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 97 Provide educational materials to neighborhood stakeholders regarding the Front Yard Parking Ordinance and the proper use of 311.¹⁹

Recommendation 98 Ensure the inclusion of particular portions of the NLCNPA within the Restricted Parking Areas Map of the Front Yard Parking Ordinance.



Excessive parking on yards (above) and residential streets (Glenn Lane, right) limit pedestrian and vehicular travel through the NLCNPA.

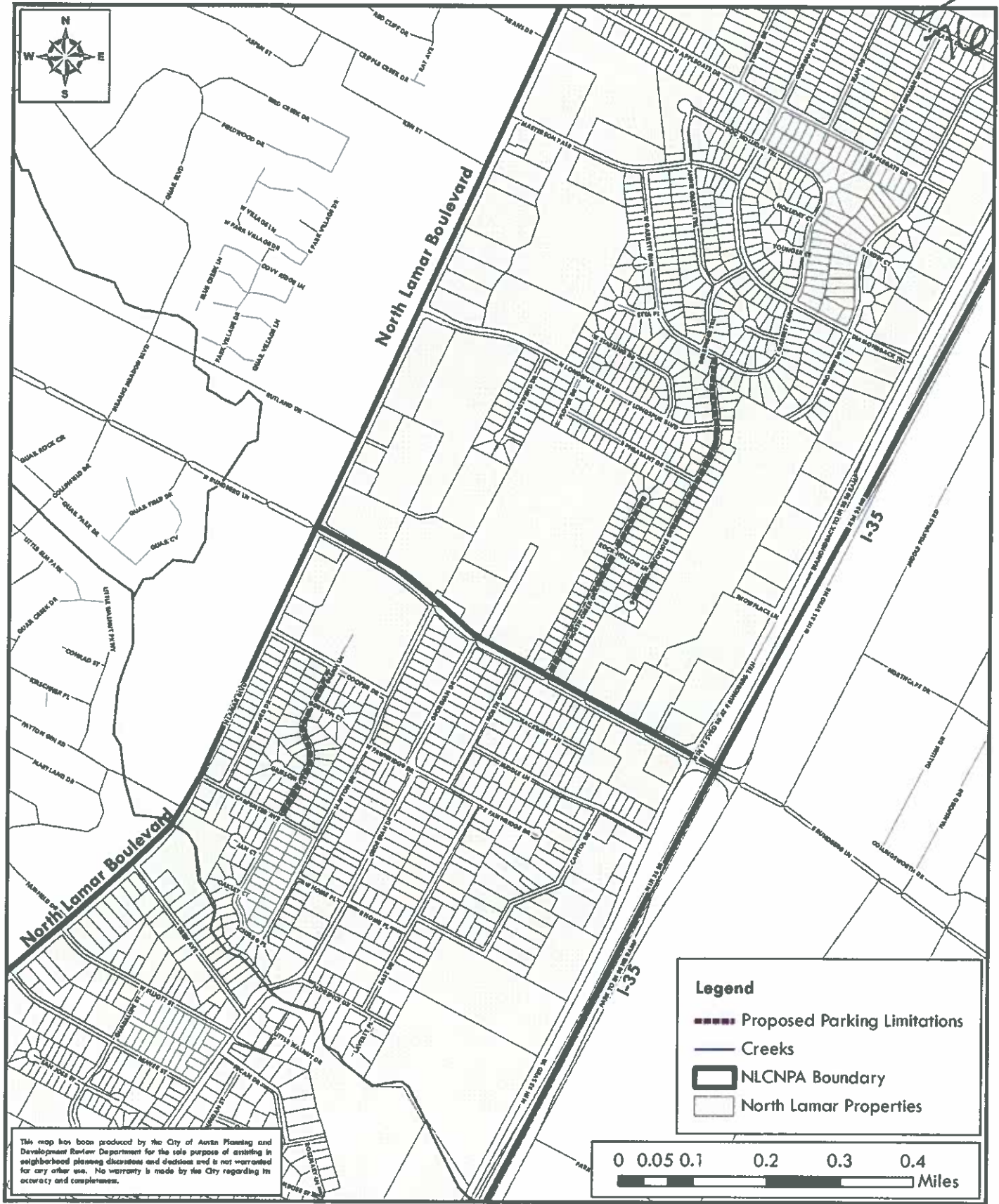
Objective T.10: Provide requirements for legally parked cars along streets within the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 99 Study the feasibility of limiting parking to only one side of interior, residential streets within the NLCNPA. These streets include:

- North Creek Drive
- Oriole Drive

¹⁹ See the *Property Reporting Code Enforcement Issues to 311* informational box on page 29.

C2-3.6



North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area

Proposed Street Parking Limitations

C23,6
77

- Glenn Lane, between Carpenter Avenue and Cooper Drive

Refer to the *Proposed Street Parking Limitations* map on page 64.

Recommendation 100 Study the feasibility of initiating the residential parking permit program on Grady Drive, especially near its intersection with Motheral Drive.

- ❖ **Travel within the neighborhoods shall be safe and free of psychological barriers.** Not all barriers are physical; they can also be psychological. Street-level crime, poorly maintained properties, and a general lack of security within the NLCNPA have heightened the concern for personal safety among users of its pedestrian transportation network. These issues have created an environment where people are afraid to use the neighborhood's sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and bus stops.



Well-lit bus stops provide more security to transit users.
Photo courtesy of <http://aeneiddayah.wordpress.com/2009/06/16/heart/>

Objective T.11: Improve the safety of pedestrians.

Recommendation 101 Design an educational outreach program to provide information regarding personal safety to those using the pedestrian transportation networks of the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 102 Consider placing emergency call boxes along pedestrian pathways within the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 103 Improve street lighting throughout the NLCNPA.

Objective T.12: Improve security at Capital Metro bus stops.

Recommendation 104 Increase patrols near all Capital Metro bus stops within the NLCNPA.

C2-3,6
78

Recommendation 105 Provide better lighting at or near Capital Metro bus stops within the NLCNPA.

❖ **Transit options should be readily accessible to everybody in the NLCNPA.**

In recent years, North Austin, including the NLCNPA, has experienced considerable growth which has increased congestion and compromised efficient and sustainable mobility throughout the region. Alongside unstable fuel prices, increased traffic congestion will force the community to examine more efficient and sustainable transportation options. These options could include an enhanced bus system, light or commuter rail lines, and an improved pedestrian network. Providing transit alternatives, especially along already heavily-trafficked corridors, will result in an overall safer, cleaner, and healthier neighborhood and environment.

Objective T.13: Provide transportation alternatives to those who live, work, or visit the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 106 Improve bicycle connections between the NLCNPA and the Crestview Capital Metro rail stop.

Recommendation 107 Consider a future light rail line along or near North Lamar Boulevard.

Objective T.14: Improve Capital Metro bus services along North Lamar Boulevard.

Recommendation 108 Improve connections to the east-west bus routes located along the 1L and 1M bus lines.

Recommendation 109 Provide route information at every bus stop. This information should include:

- Schedules
- Maps
- Connecting lines

C23,6
79

INFRASTRUCTURE

Develop infrastructure within the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area that upholds the safety and health of residents and property- and business-owners.

The infrastructure of an area is the basic structural framework that assists in its operation and functionality. Roads, sewage and water supply systems, and power grids are all infrastructural systems that support the functional performance and safety of cities, including their neighborhoods.



Drainage culverts underneath Masterson Pass

Infrastructural concerns in the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area (NLCNPA) pertain mostly to those systems that alleviate or control flooding issues throughout the neighborhood.²⁰ As Little Walnut Creek runs across the NLCNPA, large drainage basins or ditches drain stormwater runoff from area streets, parking lots, and structures into it. As such, particular portions of the NLCNPA are periodically affected by flooding and/or drainage issues as these basins or ditches reach runoff capacity. Other

areas, especially in the northern neighborhoods of the NLCNPA, lack any sort of drainage management systems to manage any flooding problems there.

Safety is one of the greatest concerns of NLCNPA residents. Particular infrastructure systems can improve the safety of both residents and pedestrians within the neighborhood: by providing a greater sense of security, streetlights and emergency call boxes could help residents feel safer when traveling through the neighborhood. Not only would safety be improved with these infrastructural systems in place, but they could also encourage residents to travel more frequently on bike or foot throughout the NLCNPA.

❖ **The curb and gutter infrastructure of the NLCNPA should be improved.**

Curbs and gutters are typically concrete elements of a roadway that facilitate the movement of stormwater runoff into area drainage basins or creeks. The construction of curbs, gutters, and other storm drain facilities can alleviate any localized flooding problems an area might have. Curbs and gutters can make streets more visually appealing; they can also make them safer by separating the pedestrian walkway(s) from the roadway. In the NLCNPA, flooding has become a concern, especially in the Mockingbird Hill subdivision of the North Lamar planning area. Several streets in Mockingbird Hill lack any improved curbs or gutters, which has contributed to flooding in recent years. Neighborhood stakeholders felt that the construction of curbs and

²⁰ All infrastructure concerns related to transportation (i.e., sidewalk connectivity and construction, road work, etc.) for the NLCNPA can be found in the Transportation chapter.

gutters along NLCNPA streets lacking this infrastructure will correct most flood-related issues and help make the area more aesthetically appealing and safe for area residents.

C2-3/6
80



Examples of a street without curbs and gutters (Turner Drive, left) and one with curbs and gutters (Slayton Drive, right)

Objective N.1: Reduce the incidence of flooding in the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 110 Construct new curbs and gutters along:

- 110.A. Grady Drive, between North Lamar Boulevard and Middle Fiskville Road
- 110.B. Turner Drive, between Grady Drive and Applegate Drive
- 110.C. Georgian Drive, between Grady Drive and Applegate Drive
- 110.D. Jean Drive, between Grady Drive and Applegate Drive
- 110.E. McMillan Drive, between Grady Drive and Applegate Drive
- 110.F. Provines Drive, between North Lamar Boulevard and the Golfsmith property line

Recommendation 111 Examine flooding issues at the following locations:

- 111.A. Georgian Drive, just north of US Highway 183
- 111.B. East Drive, just north of Florence Drive
- 111.C. Intersection of Shepard Drive and Cooper Drive
- 111.D. Intersection of Rundberg Lane and the I-35 service road
- 111.E. North Creek Drive, just north of Rundberg Lane
- 111.F. Vacant lot north of Showplace Lane
- 111.G. Masterson Pass, just west of Garrett Run
- 111.H. Applegate Drive, just west of Turner Drive

C2-3.6
81

- 111.I. Intersection of Grady Drive and North Lamar Boulevard
- 111.J. Intersection of Grady Drive and Turner Drive
- 111.K. Intersection of Grady Drive and Georgian Drive
- 111.L. Intersection of Grady Drive and Brownie Drive
- 111.M. Intersection of Middle Lane and the I-35 frontage road
- 111.N. Intersection of Provines Drive and Motheral Drive

Recommendation 112 Repair or improve existing stormwater facilities along Grady Drive, between North Lamar Boulevard and Middle Fiskville Road.

Recommendation 113 Plant native or adapted trees, shrubs, and grasses on public and private properties to improve rainwater absorption and to reduce excess runoff.

How to Report Flooding and Water Quality Concerns

Call 311 to report the following problems:

- Flooding incidents*
- Areas where damaged curbs and gutters exist
- Areas in need of new curb and gutter construction
- Creek erosion, bank instability, and other creek infrastructure problems
- When flooding, standing water, or storm drainage problems are observed

Call (512) 974-2550 to report illegal storage, dumping, or accidental spills of toxic materials or pollutants.

* The Watershed Protection Department responds to flooding problem areas on a complaint-driven basis.

Objective N.2: Reduce creek erosion in the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 114 Encourage the planting of native or adapted trees, shrubs, and grasses along or near creeks to reduce erosion and rainwater runoff.

Objective N.3: Maintain the water quality, health, and aesthetics of all creeks within the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 115 Organize a regular clean up of Little Walnut Creek, using resources from area organizations, including:

- City of Austin's Code Compliance Department

C23,6
82

- City of Austin's Watershed Protection Department
- Keep Austin Beautiful

❖ **Infrastructure throughout the NLCNPA should increase the safety of the area.**

Many neighborhood stakeholders perceived pedestrian travel throughout the NLCNPA to be unsafe. Infrastructural systems thought to improve safety in the neighborhood were the addition of streetlighting and emergency call boxes throughout the NLCNPA. These will allow for a heightened sense of security, especially for those pedestrians traveling through the neighborhood: the presence of improved street lighting and emergency call boxes would alleviate the fears of unsafe pedestrian travel within the NLCNPA.



An example of neighborhood streetlighting on Applegate Drive (left) and an example of an emergency call box (right).

Photo at right courtesy of <http://www.311band.com/images/cordiblow1.jpg>

Objective N.4: Improve streetlighting in the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 116 Install streetlights at the following locations:

- 116.A. Corner of Dungan Street and East Walnut Drive
- 116.B. Corner of East Walnut Drive and Pecan Drive
- 116.C. West end of Rock Hollow Lane
- 116.D. East end of Longspur Boulevard
- 116.E. Corner of Brownie Drive and Diamondback Trail
- 116.F. Corner of East Grady Drive and Middle Fiskville Road

Recommendation 117 Repair streetlights at the following locations:

C2-314
43

- 117.A. Primrose Street, between Dungan Street and Pecan Drive
- 117.B. Corner of North Creek Drive and Rocky Hollow Lane
- 117.C. Corner of Georgian Drive and Applegate Drive

Objective N.5: Improve safety throughout the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 118 Identify locations throughout the NLCNPA where the installation of an emergency call box would be appropriate. These locations could include:

- 118.A. The intersection of East Powell Lane and Sam Rayburn Drive
- 118.B. Various points along North Lamar Boulevard, including CapMetro bus stops
- 118.C. Various points along Georgian Drive, between US Highway 183 and Rundberg Lane
- 118.D. East Wonsley Drive
- 118.E. Rundberg Lane
- 118.F. Brownie Playground
- 118.G. Barrington Park

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C2-3.6
84

LAND USE

Create a well-balanced land use pattern in the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area by assigning appropriate land uses to particular properties.

The term “land use” refers to how land is broadly used, and these uses fall into several descriptive categories such as residential, commercial, and industrial. During the course of land use planning, a future land use map (FLUM) is created to depict what types of development stakeholders would like to see in the future of their neighborhood. When creating a FLUM, land use categories are arranged to create a framework accommodating future changes—including potential development pressures and population changes—throughout the neighborhood. The FLUM also sets criteria for those areas that stakeholders wish to preserve. Through proper land use planning, the future land use map should:

- Limit the encroachment of intense uses into the residential portion(s) of a neighborhood
- Place complementary uses next to one another
- Establish a logical pattern of uses
- Place more intense uses (e.g., industry, commercial) along large, arterial roadways and away from residential neighborhoods to limit adjacent incompatible uses.



Commercial uses encroach upon a residence on Elliot Street.

While land use planning cannot foresee all eventualities, it can provide the blueprint for a more balanced and livable community for area residents, businesses, and visitors.

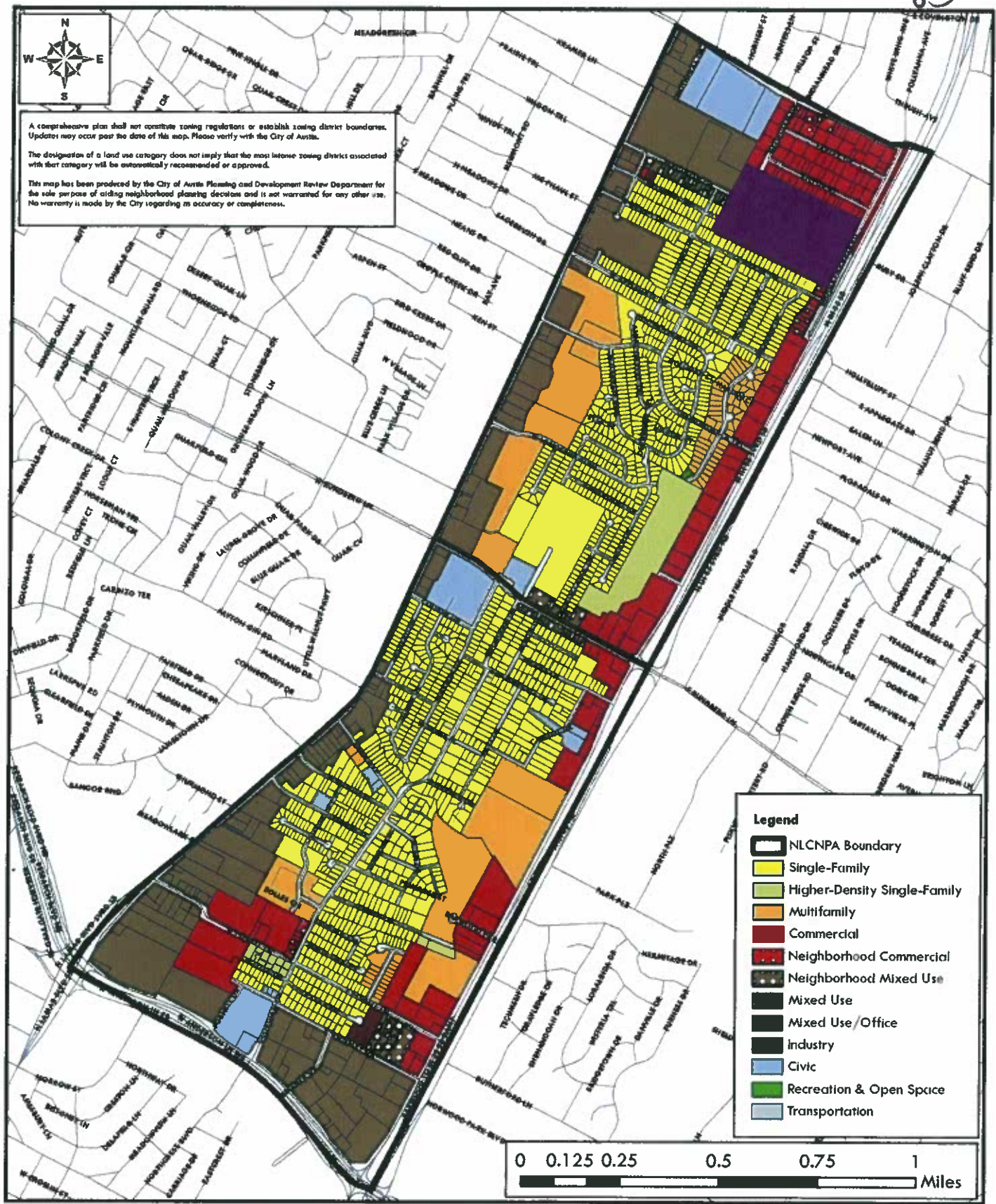
During the planning process in the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area (NLCNPA), neighborhood stakeholders worked with planning staff to determine a logical, complementary land use pattern to address future growth and development. The resulting future land use map determined the desired types and specific locations of potential developments throughout the NLCNPA, setting forth a vision for the neighborhood's future. The future land use map can be found on page 73.

❖ **The residential character of the NLCNPA should be preserved.**

A neighborhood's character or identity is determined by the variety of residential units that house those living there. This is especially true of the housing within the NLCNPA, where nearly 80 percent of the properties are residential.²¹ The neighborhood's housing

²¹ This figure is based on 2008 current land use records. A full breakdown of current land use figures (as of 2008) is available in Appendix G.

C2-3.6/85



North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area **Future Land Use Map**

C2-3,6
86

stock represents both its rural roots and suburban-like development: rural, farm-style homes, suburban-style tract homes, and large apartment complexes are all components of the housing typology found throughout the NLCNPA. Throughout the planning process, stakeholders identified the sense of place created by the variety of house designs and lot configurations as valued characteristics of their neighborhoods. By preserving the large residential core of the NLCNPA, both the character and identity of these neighborhoods will be maintained.



The housing stock of the NLCNPA represents its rural roots and suburban development with (from left) farm-style homes, suburban-style tract homes, and apartment complexes.

The single-family character of the NLCNPA is influenced by an interesting patchwork of architectural styles. In Mockingbird Hill, a neighborhood in the northern part of the NLCNPA, houses built in the 1930s share the streets with those built between the 1950s and the 2000s. This area is noticeably different from the residential subdivisions immediately to the south. The houses here were built during the 1970s and 1980s and have characteristics reminiscent of those decades. Similar patterns continue south of Rundberg Lane. The area bounded by Rundberg Lane, I-35, Little Walnut Creek, and Georgian Drive has a more markedly rural feel than the rest of the Georgian Acres neighborhood and is characterized by larger lot sizes. To the west, 1960s suburban-style development is prevalent in the residential area between North Lamar Boulevard and Georgian Drive. Many of the houses in the area between Little Walnut Creek and Oertli Lane were built in the 1950s or before. South of Oertli Lane, the housing reflects 1950s and 1960s suburban house design; houses along Red Oak Circle and White Oak Drive reflect popular styles of those decades. Regardless of the decade in which they were built, the majority of the houses throughout the NLCNPA are modest in size and ornamentation.



Turner Drive, in Mockingbird Hill, contains a good mixture of single-family houses.

C2-3.6
87



Houses on Red Oak Circle reflect popular architectural styles of the 1950s and 1960s with their front gables and ornamental, wooden tile siding.

In the planning process, stakeholders noted the need to provide housing options for current and future residents of the NLCNPA. To maintain a balanced residential character, housing options (both owner-occupied and rental units) must be readily available. However, when compared to other planning areas, the NLCNPA contains a disproportionate amount of rental units and large apartment complexes. Of the total number of residential units in the planning area, 80 percent are rental and nearly 69 percent of all housing units within the NLCNPA are in multifamily developments (Table L)²². Stakeholders thought further development of such complexes should be restricted throughout the neighborhood: they believed a more balanced mix of housing options and homeownership opportunities will stabilize the area.

Table L. Units in Structure, 2000

	Georgian Acres	North Lamar	NLCNPA	Percentage of Housing Units by Structure Type
Single Family	766	770	1,536	25.8%
Duplex	123	112	235	4.0%
Triplex or Fourplex	198	328	526	8.8%
Multifamily	2,673	891	3,564	59.9%
Other	43	41	84	1.4%
Total Units	3,803	2,142	5,945	100.0%

Source: US Census Bureau

For decades, reasonably-priced houses have attracted many residents to this historically affordable part of Austin. According to neighborhood stakeholders, it is important to maintain the area's affordability as the remainder of the City experiences housing cost increases. Maintaining affordability throughout the NLCNPA will preserve its attractive nature to prospective homebuyers and homeowners. See the "Affordable Housing" section of the Quality of Life Chapter for more information.

Objective L.1: Preserve the residential character of the neighborhoods in the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 119 Non-residential uses should not encroach into the established neighborhoods of the NLCNPA.

²² This figure includes the Triplex and Fourplex numbers as these units are typically categorized as "multifamily."

C2-3,6
88

Recommendation 120 In order to preserve the large-lot rural character of the northeastern corner of the Georgian Acres NPA, zoning requests for intense residential development should be denied.

Objective L.2: Maintain a balanced residential character throughout the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 121 Limit the construction of new, large multi-family residential complexes throughout the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 122 New, more intense residential development should contain a mixed use element and be located along major roadways.

❖ **North Lamar Boulevard should become a mixed use corridor.**

As one of the most important roadways in Austin (and the westernmost boundary for the NLCNPA), North Lamar Boulevard lacks a unique or unifying identity. North Lamar Boulevard is a major commercial thoroughfare lined with various commercial and light industrial uses including an array of storefronts, strip malls, restaurants, car lots, automobile repair shops, and storage facilities among others. According to the “North Lamar Boulevard Corridor Community Survey” conducted during the planning process, over 90 percent of respondents felt North Lamar Boulevard had a negative identity while 60 percent expressed displeasure with the corridor’s physical appearance.

To enhance this segment of North Lamar Boulevard, neighborhood stakeholders determined that it should become a mixed use corridor providing a variety of residential *and* non-residential uses. The term “mixed use” means a mixture of both residential and commercial uses within a particular area or site. This mix usually occurs within the same structure but is not always required.



The Triangle, located at the intersection of North Lamar Boulevard and Guadalupe Street, was cited by stakeholders as the example of mixed use development to be used for the redevelopment of the portion of North Lamar Boulevard that runs along the NLCNPA. A good mixture of local-serving restaurants and stores (right) are built beneath residential units in the Triangle development.

In response to the largely commercial nature along North Lamar Boulevard, neighborhood stakeholders wanted to change its current character by making it a

C2-3.6
89

pedestrian-friendly place with both neighborhood-serving establishments and residences. New mixed use development along the corridor should contain, in addition to residential units, small-scale and locally-owned commercial or retail establishments: cafés, book stores, coffee shops, and other boutique-style businesses rather than big-box-styled commercial developments. They were concerned that big-boxed building designs would not promote the human-scaled places they wanted, and are not desirable for the North Lamar Boulevard corridor. The smaller, local-serving businesses would also provide more amenities within convenient walking or biking distance from the adjacent residential areas and reduce reliance on the automobile for most trips.

Envisioning a new North Lamar Boulevard



A roadway does not have to remain in its current state. Strategic changes can revitalize a corridor and make it a place where people want to be. The images at left represent some of the design elements recommended by stakeholders during the planning process.



The North Lamar Boulevard corridor currently lacks any of those elements that provide a pleasant experience for both motorists and pedestrians (top). The corridor is characterized by a wide roadway, large building setbacks, little or no sidewalks, overhead power lines, and several large commercial signs or billboards.



Building a continuous sidewalk, reducing the number of driveways, and planting trees and other landscaping are the first steps in creating a place for pedestrians along North Lamar Boulevard (middle). The removal of the overhead power lines and signs eliminates significant amounts of visual clutter.

Streetlights and mixed use buildings foster a more pedestrian-friendly and visually-stimulating environment (bottom). The redevelopment of existing sites by moving buildings closer to the street provides an inviting atmosphere for those traveling along the thoroughfare.

Physical improvements such as those presented in this series of photographs can lay the groundwork for additional changes to the corridor. These improvements will create a North Lamar Boulevard in which area residents can take pride.

C2-3.6
90

Certain design elements should be incorporated into future development (mixed use, commercial, or residential) along the North Lamar Boulevard corridor.²³ Neighborhood stakeholders indicated that new buildings should be sited at the front of their lots nearest the roadway with parking located to the rear or side of the buildings. The buildings' commercial entrances should front the street to create a more pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. Trees or other shading mechanisms also need to be included in future developments to provide pedestrians shelter from intense sunlight and heat experienced throughout the year, especially during the summer months.



The mixed use developments in San Francisco (left) and along 2nd Street in downtown Austin (right) have commercial entrances fronting the street and pedestrian pathways protected by trees and planters, respectively.

Although neighborhood stakeholders recommended that North Lamar Boulevard become a mixed use corridor, there was a recognition and concern about the affordability of these future developments. Concerned about affordability in similar developments throughout the City, neighborhood stakeholders wanted a portion of the new residential units of mixed use developments to be as affordable as possible. They felt it important to ensure affordability in these new developments to maintain the NLCNPA's position as a relatively affordable neighborhood within the City of Austin.

Objective L.3: *Establish North Lamar Boulevard as a mixed use, pedestrian-friendly corridor.*

Recommendation 123 Apply the mixed use future land use designation to all properties fronting North Lamar Boulevard.

²³ The design elements mentioned in this section should comply with the standards for future (re)development occurring on a Core Transit Corridor as set forth by "Subchapter E: Design Standards and Mixed Use" of the Austin City Code. During the planning process, stakeholders expressed the desire to re-designate North Lamar Boulevard, north of US Highway 183, as a Core Transit Corridor as stricter design guidelines are applied to developments along such roadways.

C2-3,6
91

- Recommendation 124** Designate North Lamar Boulevard as a Core Transit Corridor as defined in “Subchapter E: Design Standards and Mixed Use” of the Austin City Code.
- Recommendation 125** Incorporate small-scale, neighborhood-serving commercial or retail establishments into new mixed use developments.
- Recommendation 126** The design of new buildings along North Lamar Boulevard should reflect and celebrate the diverse mix of cultures represented in the NLCNPA.
- Recommendation 127** All new development (mixed use, commercial, or multi-family) must be pedestrian-friendly and oriented towards the street with parking located to the rear of the building(s).
- Recommendation 128** Place buffers, in addition to trees, between traffic and new sidewalks along North Lamar Boulevard. These buffers could include concrete or masonry planters or decorative bollards.
- Recommendation 129** New mixed use developments must be compatible to adjacent properties and uses.

Objective L.4: All new mixed use development should contain affordable units.

- Recommendation 130** Set aside 10 percent of all residential units within the new mixed use developments at an affordability level of 80 percent of the median family income of the NLCNPA or City of Austin.

❖ **Provide a variety of housing options on the vacant land near Rundberg Lane**

Smaller, undeveloped parcels are distributed throughout the NLCNPA and provide modest opportunities for new development. The most notable exceptions to this are the approximately 50 acres of undeveloped land north of Rundberg Lane. The properties near Rundberg Lane consist of three tracts (see the *Special Use Infill Tracts* map on page 81). The smallest tract (Tract 1) is approximately 4 acres while the two larger tracts (Tracts 2 and 3) are nearly 24 acres apiece. These three sites are prime locations for infill development. Infill development is that which “fills in” vacant properties or underdeveloped sites in otherwise developed areas of the City. These locations have few environmental constraints and can easily be connected to established NLCNPA neighborhoods by extending existing streets.

Infill development on these parcels should be largely residential and offer a variety of housing options such as single-family houses, duplexes, and townhouses and even a

C2-3,6
92

limited amount of apartments. Regardless of the eventual housing mix, the intent is to increase the homeownership opportunities for people of more modest incomes.

Community stakeholders recommended three approaches to encourage the goal of increased home ownership for these tracts. The first is to change the base zoning of Tract 3 to limit most residential uses to townhouses, duplexes, or single-family houses. Second, stakeholders recommended allowing small-lot single family development on all three tracts. The third approach is to apply the Residential Infill option on all three tracts. This option, available to areas undergoing the neighborhood planning process, allows for a mix of different housing types. The variety of different housing could provide homeownership possibilities for a broader range of household incomes. This option also requires the creation of community open space—an amenity lacking in the NLCNPA. In addition, this option allows for small amount of community-serving retail to be developed along with the residential uses. See Table M for the option's requirements.



Residential infill development can offer a variety of housing options and homeownership opportunities to NLCNPA residents.
Photos courtesy of Jones, Petha, and Pyatak. *Good Neighbors: Affordable Family Housing*. New York: McGraw Hill, 1995.

Tracts 2 and 3 have frontage along Rundberg Lane. Recognizing the commercial nature of this busy roadway, stakeholders recommended the development of small-scale, local-serving commercial or mixed use establishments for those portions of Tracts 2 and 3 fronting Rundberg Lane.

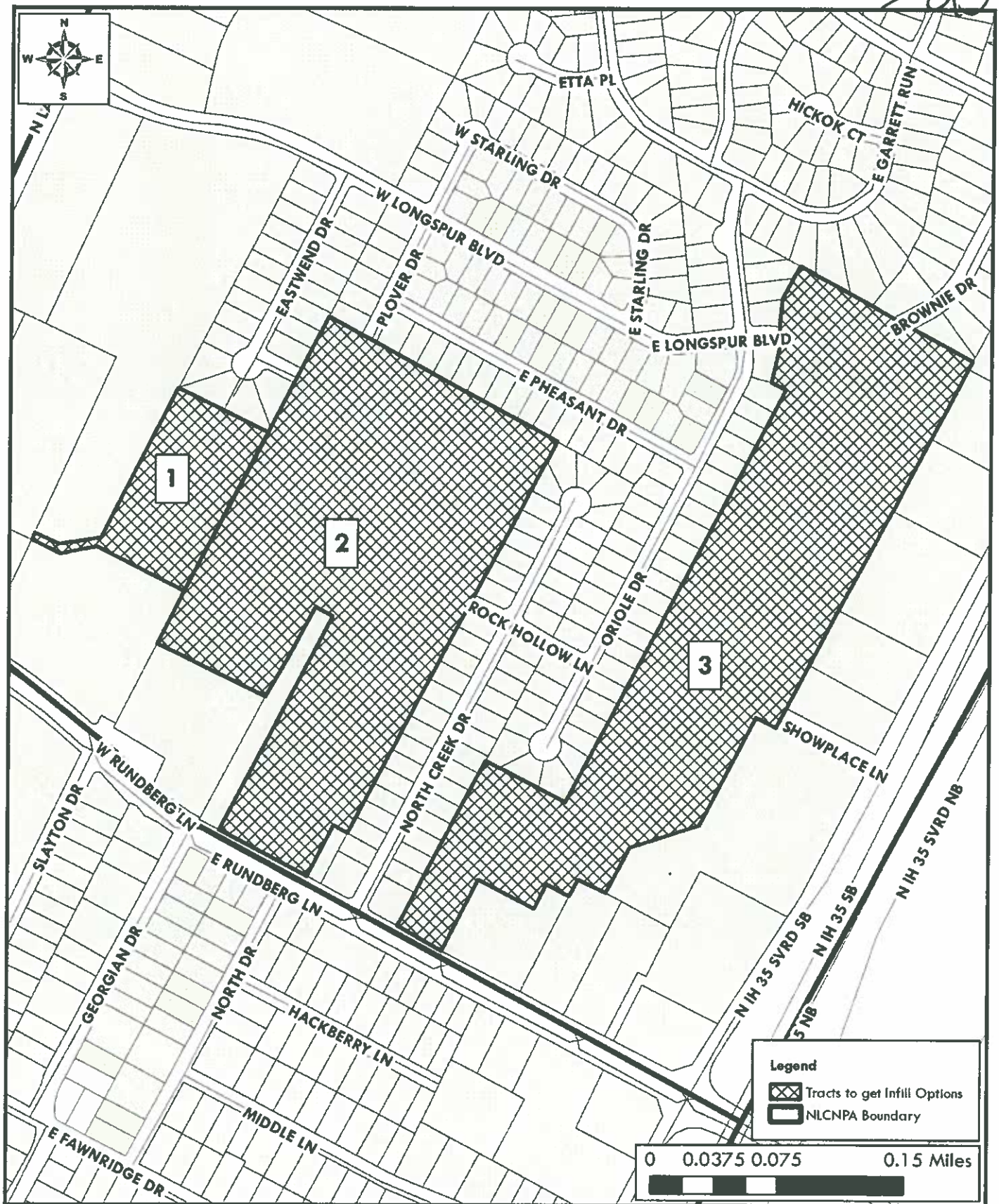
Table M. Requirements for a Residential Infill Development

Land Use	Minimum Requirements	Maximum Requirements
Single-Family	40% of total units	80% of total units
Duplexes	none	10% of total units
Townhouses and Multifamily (Apartments)	10% of total units	20% of total units
Neighborhood Commercial	none	1,000 square feet of building area per acre of site area
Community Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10% for infill parcels between 2 and 5 acres 20% for infill parcels greater than 5 acres 	---

Objective L.5: Increase the housing options and homeownership opportunities within the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 131 Allow the Urban Home Special Use on Tracts 1 - 3.

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North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area

Special Use Infill Tracts

C2-3,6
94

Recommendation 132 Allow the Residential Infill Special Use on Tracts 1 - 3.

Objective L.6: Provide a retail and/or mixed use component on Tracts 1 - 3.

Recommendation 133 Apply the neighborhood mixed use future land use designation to the portions of Tracts 2 and 3 fronting along Rundberg Lane.

Recommendation 134 Rezone the portions of Tracts 2 and 3 that front Rundberg Lane to promote neighborhood-serving commercial and mixed use developments.

❖ **Ferguson Drive should become a neighborhood mixed use district.**

Lacking a unifying identity or character, the south side of Ferguson Drive contains a number of uses, including a vehicle impound lot, an auto repair shop, a number of vacant lots and several seemingly derelict or unused buildings. To create a more neighborhood-compatible area and serve as a transition between the Chinatown shopping center and residential area immediately to the south, stakeholders wish to establish the south side of Ferguson Drive²⁴ as a neighborhood mixed use district.



The south side of Ferguson Drive (left) lacks character. Neighborhood, or small-scale, mixed use buildings (right) can improve the character of the roadway, providing live-work spaces for those wanting to be located near the Chinatown shopping center.

Photo at right courtesy of http://www.downtownmakeover.com/downtown_reno/The_Hill_Street_Mixed_Use.asp

Located across the street from the Chinatown shopping center, these properties could offer small-scale retail and/or living space for people wanting to live or work near this major commercial and cultural hub. Associating the south side of Ferguson Drive with the Chinatown shopping center could potentially provide a more unifying identity that the street currently lacks.

Objective L.7: Establish Ferguson Drive as a neighborhood mixed use district.

²⁴ The north side of Ferguson Drive is occupied by the Chinatown shopping center and any future development associated with it.

C2-3,6
95

Recommendation 135 Apply the neighborhood mixed use future land use designation to all properties along the south side of Ferguson Drive, between Motheral Drive and the Golfsmith property line.

Recommendation 136 Limit the types and intensities of the uses allowed along Ferguson Drive.

❖ **The I-35 Corridor should remain a largely commercial thoroughfare.**

Interstate Highway 35 (I-35) is the most heavily traveled road in Austin. It is also the eastern boundary for the NLCNPA, running between US Highway 183 and Braker Lane. The varieties of businesses along its frontage road look like those found along interstate frontage roads across the country. Aside from a major manufacturing facility (i.e., Golfsmith), numerous motels, and several apartment complexes, the I-35 frontage contains a variety of local and regional commercial or light industrial uses.

Land located along an interstate frontage is traditionally set aside for more intense uses (e.g., commercial retail centers, offices, etc.). However, residential uses are oftentimes located along these roadways as a means to provide easy access to various points throughout a city. NLCNPA stakeholders declined to recommend additional housing along the freeway due to poor automobile and pedestrian access to the rest of the neighborhood as well as health concerns associated with air pollution generated by the high volume of traffic on I-35.

Along the I-35 Corridor (between US Highway 183 and Rundberg Lane), there are no fewer than ten hotels and/or motels; while most operate strictly as motels or hotels, some effectively operate as apartments. In recent years, several of these establishments have become neighborhood nuisances. Stakeholders contended that these establishments harbor a variety of criminal activities and code violations and suggest limiting future hotel construction or development along I-35 to mitigate any potential impacts they may create for the NLCNPA.



The I-35 Corridor is marked by large apartment complexes (left), motels and various commercial and light industrial uses (center and right).

C2-3,6
96

Objective L.8: Preserve the largely commercial environment along the I-35 Corridor.

Recommendation 137 Retain all commercial future land use designations located along I-35.

Recommendation 138 Place restrictions on the development of new hotels/motels along I-35.

❖ **Preserve the commercial/industrial area in the northeastern corner of the NLCNPA.**

Although there are a few houses interspersed throughout the area, the northeastern corner of the NLCNPA is primarily a commercial district. Its relative separation from nearby residences makes this location ideal for the types of businesses currently operating—auto repair, storage, a major manufacturing facility (Golfsmith), and a variety of retail outlets and services.

Neighborhood stakeholders suggested two land use categories for this corner of the NLCNPA so to provide residents a variety of commercial services: commercial and neighborhood commercial. The commercial designation will be applied to the majority of this area while a handful of properties along Braker Lane, between Georgian Drive and Middle Fiskville Road will be designated neighborhood commercial. The neighborhood commercial designation will be more complementary to the single-family houses along the north side of Braker Lane.



Golfsmith is a major manufacturing facility in the northeastern corner of the NLCNPA (left), while properties along Braker Lane (right) offer a variety of commercial or light industrial services to the neighborhood and region.

Objective L.9: Create a node of commercial activity in the far northeastern corner of the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 139 Apply the commercial and neighborhood commercial future land use designations to this portion of the NLCNPA. See the Future Land Use Map for the properties to which each future land use designation is applied.

C2-3,6
97

❖ **Properties along the US Highway 183 frontage should be designated mixed use.**

Serving as the southern boundary of the NLCNPA, US Highway 183 is a major transportation thoroughfare for the northern portion of the City of Austin. With its accessible location near the convergence of two major highways, this portion of the NLCNPA houses several intense uses including high- and low-rise office buildings, apartment complexes, and hotels.

According to neighborhood stakeholders, all properties along the US Highway 183 frontage (aside from Gethsemane Lutheran Church and the SPCA) and all properties within the area bounded by US Highway 183, Georgian Drive, East Wonsley Drive, and I-35 should be given a mixed use future land use designation. The mixed use designation would allow for a greater mixture of residential units among those more intense uses that already exist within this area.



New mixed use development could enhance the southern end of the NLCNPA, near the intersection of US Highway 183 and I-35. Current properties (left) and vast parking lots (right) located along the frontage could be transformed into a dense urban-type village with a mixture of businesses and residences.

Objective L.10: Establish a mixed use district at the southern end of the NLCNPA.

Recommendation 140 Apply the mixed use future land use designation to the southern portion of the NLCNPA. See the Future Land Use Map for the exceptions to this recommendation.

C2-3,6
9/8

CONCLUSION

The North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area's neighborhood plan reflects over two years of collaboration between City of Austin staff and stakeholders from the North Lamar and Georgian Acres planning areas.

The primary organization responsible for implementing the recommendations found herein will be the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Plan Contact Team. In 2003, the Austin City Council approved an ordinance that required all neighborhood planning areas to form a contact team. According to the ordinance, the contact team will be a diverse group and must include at least one member from each of the following categories: property owner, renter, business owner, and a representative for each neighborhood association within the planning area. The contact team will work in coordination with the Planning and Development Review Department to achieve the goals, objectives, and recommendations of this neighborhood plan.

In addition to implementing the plan's recommendations, the contact team is responsible for making recommendations to any future amendments to the neighborhood plan.

The contact team will work closely with the Planning and Development Review Department's "implementation planner," whose primary responsibility is to facilitate coordination between the contact team, City departments, and other applicable agencies working to implement the neighborhood plan's recommendations. Therefore, it is essential that the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Areas maintain an active contact team, for this organization holds the responsibility of upholding and achieving the NLCNPA's vision.



Slayton Drive

APPENDICES

036
99

Appendix A: NLCNPA Meeting Timeline

Appendix B: Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Neighborhood Safety Audit Worksheet

Appendix C: Steps to a Healthier Austin Intervention Area

Appendix D: Community Health Resources

Appendix E: Steps to Starting a Community Garden on City Property in Austin

Appendix F: Sustainability Resources Available in the City of Austin

Appendix G: Current Land Use by Category, 2008

Appendix H: Final Survey Results



La Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día (left) and the Mandarin House restaurant (right) serve the diverse population of the NLCNPA and its surrounding areas.

APPENDIX A

C2-3,4
100

NLCNPA Meeting Timeline

Meeting Name	Date	Attendance	Summary
Initial Workshops			
Kick-Off	Nov. 15, 2007	50	Introduction to the planning process; prioritization of issues affecting NLCNPA
First Workshop	Dec. 6, 2007	17	Presentation of initial survey results; SWOT analysis of NLCNPA
Goals and Visioning Workshop	Jan. 24, 2008	27	Creation of goals for each general topic
Topical Meetings			
Crime & Public Safety	Mar. 12, 2008	27	Discussion of crime statistics
Crime & Code Enforcement	Apr. 2, 2008	27	Discussion of ongoing programs used by APD and SWS to combat crime and code problems
Code Enforcement	Apr. 23, 2008	37	Identification of areas with code violations in the NLCNPA
Pedestrian Transit	Jun. 3, 2008	11	Discussion of sidewalks, bike lanes, and pedestrian safety; received recommendations for sidewalk/bike lane additions
Transportation	Jun. 24, 2008	9	Overview of transportation issues and projects for the NLCNPA; discussion of dangerous driving conditions
Health in the NLCNPA	Jul. 8, 2008	14	Discussion of the relationship between healthy food options, lifestyles, and chronic illness in the NLCNPA
North Lamar Boulevard Corridor I	Jul. 29, 2008	15	Presentation of North Lamar Corridor Survey results; visual preference survey for the corridor
North Lamar Boulevard Corridor II	Aug. 19, 2008	14	Discussion of pedestrian safety along North Lamar and CapMetro Bus Rapid Transit
Parks and Trees	Oct. 16, 2008	9	Discussion of current and future park facilities; presentation of Austin Community Trees and Urban Forest programs
Infrastructure	Nov. 18, 2008	9	Overview of curb and gutter construction, areas of flooding; identification of areas needing infrastructure improvements
Sustainability	Dec. 9, 2008	12	Presentation of various programs that promote sustainability and community gardening

C2-3,6
101

Meeting Name	Date	Attendance	Summary
Mid-Process			
Mid-Process Open House	Jan. 24, 2009	34	Review draft chapters of the NLCNPA neighborhood plan
Land Use and Zoning Workshops			
Land Use I	Feb. 3, 2009	14	Exercise to determine areas of possible change throughout the NLCNPA
Land Use II	Mar. 3, 2009	13	Discussion of "areas of change" along North Lamar Blvd. and Rundberg Lane
Land Use III	Mar. 31, 2009	14	Completion of "Areas of Change" exercise
Land Use IV	Apr. 27, 2009	9	Land use education; presentation of draft FLUM(s)
Land Use V	May 18, 2009	8	Conclude FLUM discussion; Finalize future land use map
Zoning I	Jun. 24, 2009	15	Introduction to Zoning; Conditional overlay discussion
Zoning II	Jul. 29, 2009	17	Contact Team information; discussion of front yard parking and mobile food vending restrictions
Zoning III	Aug. 17, 2009	15	Conversation on Infill Options and Design Tools
Zoning IV	Sep. 14, 2009	10	Presentation of zoning recommendations
Zoning V	Oct. 6, 2009	15	Finalization of zoning recommendations; vision statement creation
Final Workshop	Nov. 2, 2009	18	Wrap-up discussions on residential design guidelines and infill tools, front yard parking, and finalization of FLUM and zoning rec's.
Rezoning Notification Meeting	Feb. 24, 2010	26	Discussion of the rezonings made during the planning process.
Final Open House			
Final Open House	Mar. 6, 2010	27	Review the NLCNPA plan and zoning recommendations
Implementation			
Planning Commission	Spring 2010	---	Approval of the NLCNPA plan and zoning recommendations
City Council	Spring 2010	---	Approval and adoption of the NLCNPA plan and zoning recommendations

APPENDIX B

C2-3,6
102

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Neighborhood Safety Audit Worksheet

The intent of this Neighborhood Safety Audit Worksheet is to identify localized safety issues in a particular area while using the principles set forth by the Crime Prevention through Environmental Design urban planning tool. Those principles are:

- **Territoriality:** defining the ownership of a particular space (e.g., public vs. private space). Territorial control prevents the use of a space by unauthorized users.
- **Access Control:** denial of access to specific crime targets by minimizing uncontrolled movement within a specific area.
- **Natural Surveillance:** the ability to easily observe all users of a defined space, including potential criminals.
- **Maintenance and Management:** effective upkeep of those items that support the intended purpose and use of specific spaces (e.g., lighting, landscaping).

You may use the information found through this audit to create a safety plan that lays out recommendations for a safer, more secure neighborhood.

This audit sheet is based on the one used by the Phoenix Police Department in Phoenix, Arizona.

Neighborhood Name: _____

General area of audit: _____

Date: _____ Day: _____ Time: _____

Auditor(s): _____

1) General Impressions

What is your overall impression of the area? _____

What five words best describe the general area? _____

2) Lighting

Impression of lighting:

- ☐ Very Poor
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Satisfactory
- ☐ Good

- ☐ Very Good
- ☐ Too Dark
- ☐ Too Bright

C23.6
103

Is the lighting fairly distributed throughout the area?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If streetlights are not working, identify them by their location: _____

Are you able to identify a face 75 feet away?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Do trees or bushes obscure the lighting?

☐ Yes

☐ No

How well does the lighting illuminate pedestrian walkways or sidewalks?

☐ Very Poorly

☐ Well

☐ Poorly

☐ Very Well

☐ Satisfactorily

How clearly does the lighting illuminate directional signs or maps?

☐ Very Poorly

☐ Well

☐ Poorly

☐ Very Well

☐ Satisfactorily

3) Signage

Are any street signs missing from the area?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Are street signs adequately illuminated?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Is there any type of signage that should be provided in the area?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please describe the type and location: _____

C2-3,6
104

4) Sight Lines

Can you clearly see what's around you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If no, what is blocking your view?

☐ Bushes

☐ Hill(s)

☐ Fences

☐ Other _____

Are there places someone could be hiding?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, where? _____

What would make it easier for you to see your surroundings? _____

5) Isolation

At the time of this audit, are there parts of the neighborhood that feel isolated from the rest of the area?

☐ Yes

☐ No

How many areas of the neighborhood seem isolated at other times of the day?

In the early morning?

☐ None

☐ A few

☐ Several

In the evening?

☐ None

☐ A few

☐ Several

During the day?

☐ None

☐ A few

☐ Several

After 10 p.m.?

☐ None

☐ A few

☐ Several

Is it easy to predict when people will be around?

☐ Yes

☐ No

How far away is the nearest person to hear a call for help? _____

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105

Other Comments: _____

6) Movement Predictors (as related to predictable and unchangeable routes)

Is there a frequently traveled route used by pedestrians in the neighborhood?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Is there an alternative, well-lit, and frequently traveled route available?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Is the end of the route clearly visible?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Are there places along the route where someone could hide and wait for you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Other Comments: _____

7) Possible Entrapment Sites

Are there small, confined areas where you could be hidden from view (e.g., between garbage bins, alleys, recessed doorways)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, specify where you could be hidden from view: _____

C2-3,6
106

8) Escape Routes

How easy would it be for an offender to disappear from this area?

- ☐ Not Very Easy
- ☐ Quite Easy
- ☐ Very Easy

9) Nearby Land Uses

What types of things are near to this area?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stores | <input type="checkbox"/> Apartments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offices | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural area/park |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restaurants | <input type="checkbox"/> Parking lot |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Factories | <input type="checkbox"/> School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High-traffic roadway | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Houses | _____ |

Can you identify who owns or maintains nearby properties?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

What are your impressions of nearby land uses?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very Poor | <input type="checkbox"/> Good |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poor | <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory | |

10) Maintenance

What are your impressions of property maintenance at this site?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very Poor | <input type="checkbox"/> Good |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poor | <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory | |

Is there litter lying around?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

Does the general area feel cared for?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

C2-3,6
107

Does the general area feel abandoned?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, why does it feel abandoned? _____

Is there graffiti present?

☐ Yes

☐ No

11) Sense of Safety

Would other materials, tones, textures, or colors improve your sense of safety?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Other Comments: _____

12) Overall Design

What are your impressions of property maintenance at this site?

☐ Very Poor

☐ Good

☐ Poor

☐ Very Good

☐ Satisfactory

If you weren't familiar with this area, would it be easy to find your way around?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Other Comments: _____

After the Audit

C2-3,6
109

Organize your findings

After the audit, you will have a lot of information regarding potential safety issues in the area and possible solutions to those issues. One way to organize all of this information is to group the findings together based on specific factors (e.g., lighting). You could also group findings by type of space (e.g., parking lots) or by specific uses of the space (e.g., strip mall).

If a specific area has been overlooked in the initial audit, consider talking with people that might use that specific area on a regular basis. If there is no one to talk to, conduct a short audit for that specific area.

Sharing the results

It is important to get support, information, ideas, and feedback from the people who live or work in the area in which this safety audit was conducted. Ideally, these people should be part of the audit group, but if they were not, it is important that they get involved in the process at this point. Consider holding small group meetings to provide non-participants in the audit the opportunity to discuss their concerns and help in making recommendations.

Making recommendations

Before you make any recommendations, first prioritize the identified problems. This allows for the most effective use of the resources that may be available to address those problems.

It is important that the recommendations you make can actually solve the problems identified in this audit. Think comprehensively when making recommendations. For example, you may decide a building needs a sign for identification purposes; but, putting up a sign without any illumination is only a partial solution.

Working for Change

Work with several entities, including area neighborhood associations or the Austin Police Department, to assist with the safety audit and to prepare a safety plan for those problems identified in the audit. Remember, though, that these entities' resources may be limited, and it may be important to identify other sources to assist in solving the safety issues in the area.

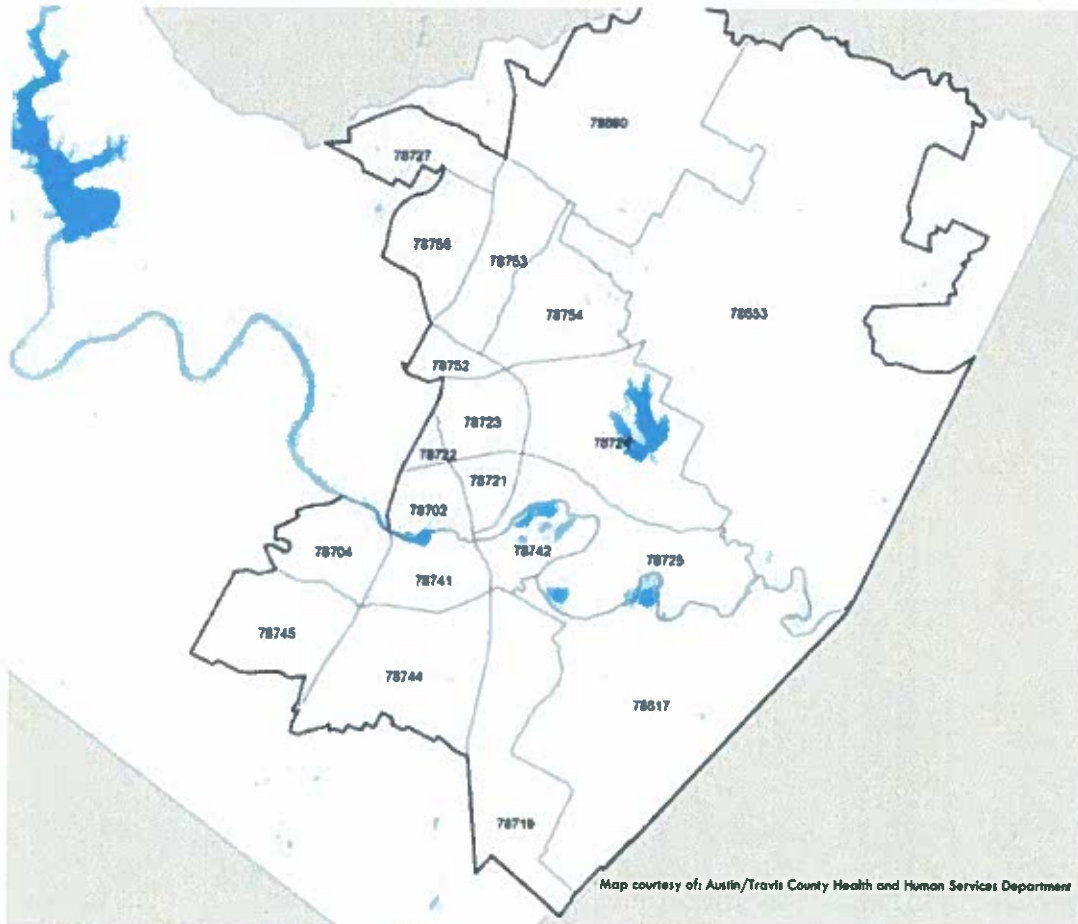
Resources that could be helpful in preparing a safety plan include:

- The National Crime Prevention Council (www.ncpc.org) and their *Designing Safer Communities: A Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Handbook* (1997).
- Jeffrey, C. Ray. *Crime Prevention through Environmental Design*. Beverly Hills: Sage, 1971.
- Newman, Oscar. *Defensible Space: Crime Prevention through Urban Design*. New York: Macmillan, 1972.

APPENDIX C

C2-3,6
110

Steps to a Healthier Austin Intervention Area



The intervention area of eastern Travis County (shown above), of which the NLCNPA is part, has higher rates of chronic disease, including asthma, diabetes, and obesity, and is the focus of the Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department's Steps to a Healthier Austin initiative. The Steps to a Healthier Austin initiative provides resources to Austin and Travis County communities to reduce health disparities and promote quality healthcare through the implementation of community action plans.

More information on Steps to a Healthier Austin can be found at:

- <http://www.healthierus.gov/steps/grantees/austin.html>
- <http://www.ithriveaustin.org/>

APPENDIX D

Community Health Resources

Note: The contact information provided below was up-to-date at the time of this neighborhood plan's adoption. However, this information can change at any time after the plan's adoption date.

Nutrition Resources

- **Sustainable Food Center**
1106 Clayton Lane, Suite 480W
Austin, Texas 78723
(512) 236-0074
<http://www.sustainablefoodcenter.org/>
- **The Happy Kitchen / La Cocina Alegre Cooking and Nutrition Education Classes**
The Happy Kitchen / La Cocina Alegre Cooking and Nutrition Education Classes impart vital knowledge that enables individuals to choose and prepare healthy meals and snacks for their families. A free, interactive 6-week series, these classes emphasize the selection and preparation of fresh, seasonal foods that are safe, nutritious, economical, and delicious. Taught by trained peer facilitators at various community sites around Austin, classes are offered in both English and in Spanish. Classes meet once a week for 1 1/2 hours to cook, discuss, and learn together. Everyone leaves each meeting with recipes and groceries to practice new cooking skills.

Contact: Joy Casnovsky, Program Coordinator
(512) 236-0074 x104
joy@sustainablefoodcenter.org
http://www.sustainablefoodcenter.org/THK_overview.html
- **The Austin Farmers' Market at The Triangle**
46th Street and North Lamar Boulevard
Austin, Texas 78751
Wednesdays, 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., year-round
<http://www.austinfarmersmarket.org/>
- **The Austin Farmers' Market Neighborhood Farm Stand**
St. John Neighborhood Market at the St. John Neighborhood Center
7500 Blessing Avenue
Austin, Texas 78752
Wednesdays, 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., late May through July
<http://www.austinfarmersmarket.org/>

Physical Activities Resources

- **Walk Texas!**
Walk Texas – Active Austin Chapter is a free program for anyone who lives or works in Austin or Travis County, who wants to become more physically active. It includes a quarterly 10-Week Challenge, Group Leader Orientation, & incentives.

Contact: Sabrina McCarty
(512) 972-5463
sabrina.mccarty@ci.austin.tx.us
<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/diabetes/walktx.shtm>

C2-3,6
112

- **Gus Garcia Recreation Center**
1201 East Rundberg Lane
Austin, Texas 78753
(512) 339-0016
<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/parks/gusgarcia.htm>

Please call or visit for the most current pricing and schedules as programs change frequently and are not always updated online.

- **Virginia L. Brown Recreation Center**
7500 Blessing Avenue
Austin, Texas 78752
(512) 974-7865
<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/parks/stjohns.htm>

Please call or visit for the most current pricing and schedules as programs change frequently and are not always updated online.

- **Kennemer Neighborhood Pool at Lanier High School**
1032 Peyton Gin Road
Austin, Texas 78758
http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/parks/pools_schedule.htm#Kennemer
- **St. John's Neighborhood Pool**
889 Wilks Avenue
Austin, Texas 78752
http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/parks/pools_schedule.htm#St.%20John's
- **Walnut Creek Municipal Pool**
12138 North Lamar Boulevard
Austin, Texas 78753
(512) 834-0824
http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/parks/pools_schedule.htm#Walnut

Community Gardening Resources

- **Sustainable Food Center's Grow Local Program**
1106 Clayton Lane, Suite 480W
Austin, Texas 78723
(512) 236-0074
http://www.sustainablefoodcenter.org/GL_overview.html

Contact: Sari Albornoz, Grow Local Program Director

(512) 236-0074 x110
sari@sustainablefoodcenter.org

C2-3,6
113

- **Austin Parks Foundation**
816 Congress Avenue, Suite 1680
Austin, Texas 78701
(512) 477-1566
<http://www.austinparks.org/>
- **Keep Austin Beautiful**
55 North IH-35, Suite 215
Austin, Texas 78702
(512) 391-0617
<http://www.KeepAustinBeautiful.org/>

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APPENDIX E

Steps to Starting a Community Garden on City Property in Austin

As compiled by the Sustainable Food Center

Note: The contact information provided below was up-to-date at the time of this neighborhood plan's adoption. However, this information can change at any time after the plan's adoption date.

1. Once you find a piece of property, first find out who owns the lot through a search of the Travis County Appraisal District (www.traviscad.org).
2. If the property is owned by the City of Austin, contact the City of Austin Real Estate Director to find out current and future plans for the property and under what jurisdiction it falls.
3. If available for a minimum of 5 years, submit a license agreement application to Andy Halm, City of Austin Right-of-Way Management. The approval process takes a minimum of 5 months.

A copy of the license agreement and a list of all required documents (License Agreement Procedure Packet) can be found at: <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/realestate/>.

In addition to the application, you will be required to submit the following:

- \$425 fee
 - Certificate of Insurance in the amount of \$500,000 for General Liability and MUST name the City of Austin as additional insured to the policy.
 - Updated Survey (Cost: \$450+)
 - Signed Resolution of Corporate Authority specifying who is authorized to sign on behalf of the organization.
 - Detailed Plan with all existing water and wastewater mains, service lines, meter and cleanout locations. (Info. can be obtained at Austin Water's Maps and Records and Taps Office, Waller Creek Center, 625 E. 10th St.)
4. Once approved, you will need to submit an application for a Commercial Water/Wastewater Tap Permit to Austin Water Utility. The application can be at: <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/water/tapforms.htm>

You will also need to submit the following documentation along with the application:

- Construction Notes
- Utility Plan Pages
- Detail Sheet

You will need to contact a civil engineer to draw up the plans for the meter installation (Cost: \$2,500+) and a general contractor to install the meter. The cost of materials and labor to install the meter can cost as much as \$11,500.

C2-3,6
T15

Community Gardens are exempt from paying the Capital Recovery Fee however there are other required fees, such as the Construction Inspection Fee, which is not waived. The associated fee amount is based on the estimated construction costs.

5. Concurrent with submission of the water/wastewater permit application, you will also need to submit an application for designation as a Qualified Community Garden to the **Austin Parks and Recreation Department**.

- Before submitting the application though, contact Kimberly Freeman (974-3162) to find out if the garden is located on property in:

- (1) an area designated by the council for Community Development Block Grant program centralization; or
- (2) a census tract in which the current census indicates that not less than 51 percent of the residents are below the federal poverty level.

If the garden location does not meet the restrictions on location, it will not be approved as a qualified community garden so you will not need to submit the application.

- According to City of Austin Code, Chapter 8-4: Qualified Community Garden:

- (1) A qualified community garden under this chapter must be a parcel of land used as a cooperative garden that is platted as a legal lot or exempted under Section 25-4-3 (*Temporary Exemption from Platting Requirements*).
- (2) A non-profit organization incorporated in Texas may apply to have a cooperative garden designated as a qualified community garden.

- Included in this application will need to be the following information:

- Internal Revenue Service documentation of the organization's non-profit tax status;
- the organization's articles of incorporation;
- the organization's bylaws;
- a certified statement that no habitable or permanent structure is located on the property used to be a qualified community garden, including a map or plat of the site documenting the location of any existing structure;
- a certified statement that the organization has:
 1. been in operation not less than one year before the date of the application as a cooperative garden, or is sponsored by an organization that has operated as a cooperative garden; and
 2. a purpose that includes agriculture, gardening, or economic development;
- the name, address and telephone number of the person who manages the cooperative garden;
- a plan of operation for the qualified community garden, including fees, membership requirements, and business hours;

C 2-3,6
116

- a membership list, including the names and addresses of not less than four unrelated persons or families to participate in the qualified community garden;
- the organization's current financial statement, audit, or Internal Revenue Service Form 990;
- if applicable, a lease or agreement with the owner of the site authorizing use of the site for not less than 12 months from the date of the application, including a legal description of the property; and
- certification of the current federal census, if required for qualification under Section 8-4-3 (*Restriction on Location*).

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APPENDIX F

C2-3,6
117

Sustainability Resources Available in the City of Austin

Note: The contact information provided below was up-to-date at the time of this neighborhood plan's adoption. However, this information can change at any time after the plan's adoption date.

Plants, Produce, and Gardening

- Community Gardens (http://www.sustainablefoodcenter.org/GL_overview.html)
- Planting New Trees (<http://www.treefolks.org/>)
- Farmer's Market (<http://www.austinfarmersmarket.org/>)
- Rain Gardens (<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/growgreen/raingardenplants.htm>)
- Native Plant Landscaping (<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/growgreen/plants.htm>)
- Subsidized Rain Barrels (<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/watercon/rbsales.htm>)
- Subsidized Rain Harvesting Systems (<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/watercon/rwrebates.htm>)

Neighborhood Sustainability

- Green Neighbor Program (<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/watershed/greenneighbor/>)
- Neighborhood Habitat Program (<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/parks/wildlifehabitatchallenge.htm>)
- Green Building
(<http://www.austinenergy.com/Energy%20Efficiency/Programs/Green%20Building/>)

Home Efficiency

- Home Solar (<http://www.austinenergy.com/Energy%20Efficiency/Programs/index.htm>)
- Selling Excess Solar Power to the Grid
(<http://www.austinenergy.com/Energy%20Efficiency/Programs/Rebates/Solar%20Rebates/faq.htm>)
- Free Low-Flow Toilets (<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/watercon/sftoilet.htm>)
- Free Water-Efficient Showerheads and Faucets
(<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/watercon/showerheads.htm>)

Carbon Footprint Calculator

- Calculate your carbon footprint (http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/acpp/co2_footprint.htm)

APPENDIX G

Current Land Use by Category, 2008

C2-3,6
118

	Total Number of Parcels	Percent Total of Parcels	Acreage
Single Family	1,453	72.9%	347.1
Mobile Home	74	3.7%	15.4
Multifamily	109	5.5%	189.2
Commercial	133	6.7%	196.3
Office	32	1.6%	23.9
Industrial	67	3.4%	111.0
Civic	17	0.9%	47.0
Open Space	3	0.2%	0.8
Transportation	9	0.5%	4.1
Roads	2	0.1%	1.5
Utilities	1	0.1%	0.5
Undeveloped	92	4.6%	107.8
Total	1,992	100.0%	1,044.6

Source: City of Austin, Planning and Development Review Department

APPENDIX H

Final Survey Results

C 2-3,6
119

At the end of the planning process, Planning and Development Review Department staff administered an online and paper survey to gauge the entire community's support of the NLCNPA neighborhood plan. All property owners, business owners, and renters were notified of the survey in a neighborhood-wide mailout in February 2010. Twenty-four survey responses were received and reviewed by staff in the three-week period allotted for participation in the survey. The final survey's questions and responses can be found below.

1) Please rate your level of support for the NLCNPA Neighborhood Plan. / Por favor, marque su cantidad de apoyo para el plan de los vecindarios de North Lamar.

Response	Response Count	Response Percentage
Fully Supportive / Yo lo apoyo completamente	11	45.8%
Generally Supportive / Yo lo apoyo en general	8	33.3%
Generally Unsupportive / Yo no lo apoyo en general	1	4.2%
No support / No tengo apoyo	1	4.2%
Unfamiliar with the Plan / No soy familiar con el plan	3	12.5%

2) Are you satisfied with the planning process in the NLCNPA? / ¿Está satisfecho con el proceso de planificación en los vecindarios de North Lamar?

Response	Response Count	Response Percentage
Very Satisfied / Muy satisfecho	4	16.7%
Satisfied / Satisfecho	7	29.2%
Neutral / No tengo una opinión	7	29.2%
Very Dissatisfied / No satisfecho	2	8.3%
Did not Participate in the Process / No participé en el proceso	4	16.7%

3) How did you participate in the planning process? (Check all that apply.) / ¿Cómo usted participó en el proceso de planificación? (Marque todos que aplican.)

Response	Response Count	Response Percentage
Survey(s) / Encuesta(s)	9	28.1%
Correspondence with staff / Correspondencia con los empleos del departamento	2	6.3%
Planning meetings / Reuniones	7	21.9%
I was not involved / No participé en el proceso	11	34.4%
Other / Otro	2	6.3%
Skipped Question	1	3.1%

4) How did you hear about neighborhood planning meetings? (Check all that apply.) /
 ¿Cómo usted aprendió el proceso de planificación? (Marque todos que aplican.)

C2-3.6
 120

Response	Response Count	Response Percentage
Postcards, Letters, Flyers / Correo	16	45.7%
Signs posted in the neighborhood / Señales en el vecindario	1	2.9%
E-mail / Correo electrónico	5	14.3%
City of Austin website / Sitio de web de la Ciudad	3	8.6%
Neighborhood Association / Asociación del vecindario	4	11.4%
This is the first time I've heard about the plan / Es mi primera vez aprender del proceso	5	14.3%
Other / Otro	0	0.0%
Skipped Question	1	2.9%

5) Please provide any suggestions on how to improve the neighborhood planning process. /
 ¿Cómo mejoramos el proceso de planificación?

- A. I have no suggestions at this time.
- B. Present zoning options earlier in the program. Make zoning descriptions that are easier to enforce. Treat individuals and businesses that hoard metal, cars, and trash in a neighborhood as a more serious issue. The habit is destructive to a neighborhood.
- C. News letter, email, etc.
- D. Opportunities for online input versus attending meetings. Perhaps video presentations which allow input following the viewing.
- E. Faster where possible. I would be at this meeting but we will be out of state.
- F. Have representatives from each of the surrounding neighborhoods represented and business owners, so that they can work together to get through it. I felt like our neighborhood - Eubank Acres had many participants, but not heard as much as I'd like.
- G. The greener the better, though I'm not really equipped to measure how much more green something is.
- H. Better supervision of the school children at Georgian and Fawnridge that catch the city bus everyday and keep them off of the private property mainly my chainlink fence that they have destroyed. I have lived here for sixty years.
- I. Maybe a door to door survey or asking people to be involved - personally.
- J. This is a very low-quality product in return for the amount of city and neighborhood resources used to produce it. There does not seem to be any budget accountability in this process. At a minimum, an output should be an accounting of the amount of staff and neighborhood time and other resources. Neighborhoods should have the option of a planning process facilitated by city staff, or of receiving the equivalent amount of money to contract with professional neighborhood planners.

C2-3,6
121

6) In the North Lamar Combined Neighborhood Planning Area, I am a... (Check all that apply.) / En los vecindarios de North Lamar, soy un... (Marque todos que aplican.)

Response	Response Count	Response Percentage
Homeowner / Dueño de casa	18	69.2%
Renter / Alquilado	2	7.7%
Business Owner / Dueño de empresa	2	7.7%
Non-resident property owner / Dueño de propiedad (pero no vivo en los vecindarios de North Lamar)	3	11.5%
Other / Otro	1	3.8%

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